

6/2/11

Tel: 0467 651247.

Paul Stallard,  
Bailies of Bennachie,  
4.St.Ninians,  
Monymusk,  
Inverurie,  
Aberdeenshire.  
AB51 7HF.

December 30 1994.

Ms.J.Munro,  
Public Affairs,  
Shell Uk Expro Ltd.,  
Aberdeen.

Dear Judith,

As promised via all-in-one the other day, I enclose a checked and corrected copy of the submission I have made to you for funding assistance either from Public Affairs direct, or through the Shell Better Britain Campaign and for inclusion as an entry in the Scottish Environmental Awards Campaign.

I have written to a number of video production companies and I await their replies. I have also written to the principal helicopter operators and will likewise keep you in touch with any developments there.

If you want to get hold of me, I have given my home address and telephone number above.

Thankyou again for your advice.

Yours sincerely.

Paul Stallard.  
Clerk to The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie.



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Bailies of Bennachie,  
4.St.Ninians,  
Monymusk,  
Inverurie,  
Aberdeenshire.  
AB51 7HF.

December 30 1994.

Mr.A.Jones,  
General Manager,  
Bristows Helicopters Ltd.,  
Aberdeen Airport,  
Dyce,  
Aberdeen.

Dear Mr. Jones,

I write on behalf of and as Clerk to The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie. The work of The Bailies is explained in the accompanying paperwork.

We are applying to Shell Uk Expro (with whom I am a staff member offshore), for funding assistance in the production of the video film which is also outlined in the paperwork.

My enquiry is whether your company would consider providing an aircraft and crew in exchange for favourable publicity, to provide a filming platform from which the aerial components of the project could be taken. The video is intended for display at the new Bennachie Centre, at other appropriate venues and in schools, etc.

The tasking of the aircraft would involve work exclusively in the immediate area of the hills known as Bennachie.

We are currently inviting **local** video film production companies to bid for the production work, and their bids will be exclusive of the provision of aircraft.

The response of Shell Public Affairs in Aberdeen has been very encouraging and they have passed our submission on to the local organiser and manager for the Shell Better Britain Campaign for consideration. In addition the submission will be passed by Public Affairs to the Scottish Environmental Awards Campaign which is set up between Shell, SNH and Grampian Television and will take place during the summer of 1995 with the prizes and awards being presented by Magnus Magnusson later in the year.

If you would like me to come along to meet and to discuss the project further to enable you to gather any more facts you may need to be able to make a decision, please let me know and I will contact you or your secretary to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely.

Paul Stallard.  
Clerk to The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie.



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AB51 7HF.

December 30 1994.

Mr.J.Constable,  
Managing Director,  
Grampian Helicopters Ltd.,  
Cairnhall,  
Kintore,  
Aberdeenshire.  
AB51 0YQ

Dear Mr. Constable,

I write on behalf of and as Clerk to The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie. The work of The Bailies is explained in the accompanying paperwork.

We are applying to Shell Uk Expro (with whom I am a staff member offshore), for funding assistance in the production of the video film which is also outlined in the paperwork.

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Clerk to The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie.



6/2/1

# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**



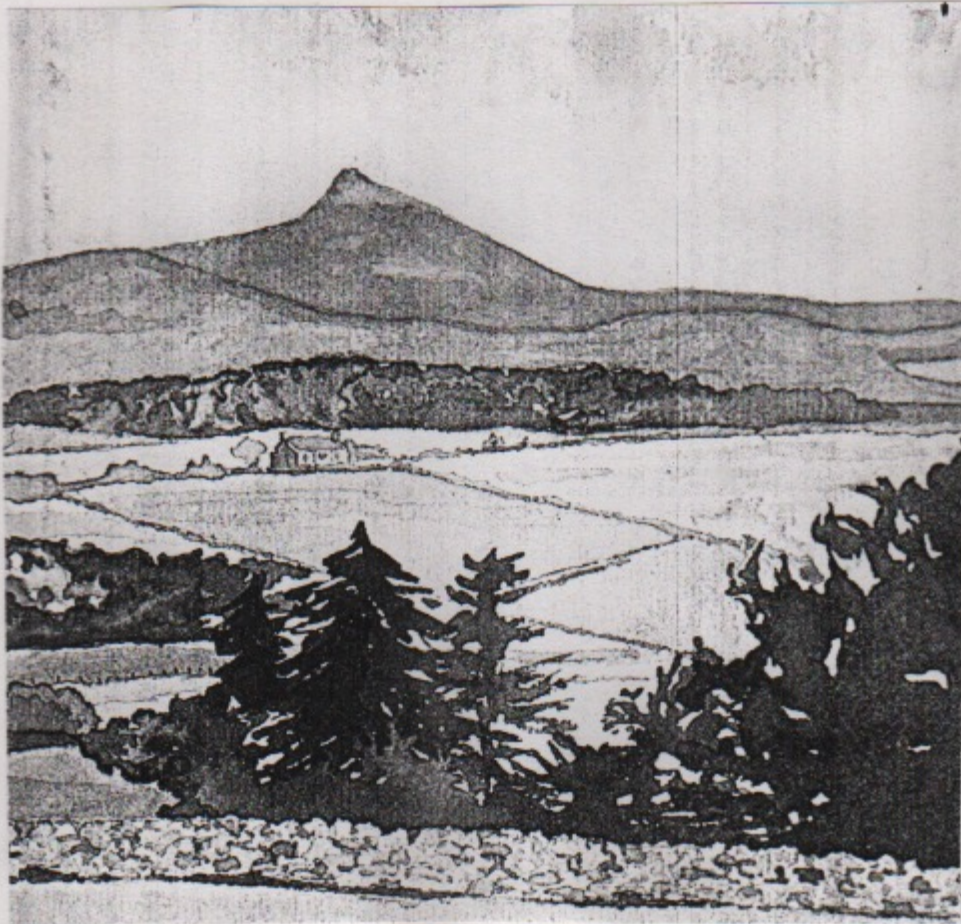
**A Submission For Funding Assistance  
in the Production of a Video Film about the hills known as  
the Bennachie Range.  
January 1994.**

This submission is presented to Shell Uk Expro, on behalf of The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie, and is for funding assistance from the 'Shell Better Britain Campaign', or from Public Affairs operational budgets.

In addition, it is submitted as an indicator of the willingness of The Bailies of Bennachie to be considered as entrants in the Scottish Environmental Awards Campaign due to be mounted during the summer of 1994.



# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**



**An Invitation to Bid for The  
Production of a Video Film about the  
hills known as the Bennachie Range.**

**January 1994.**



# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**

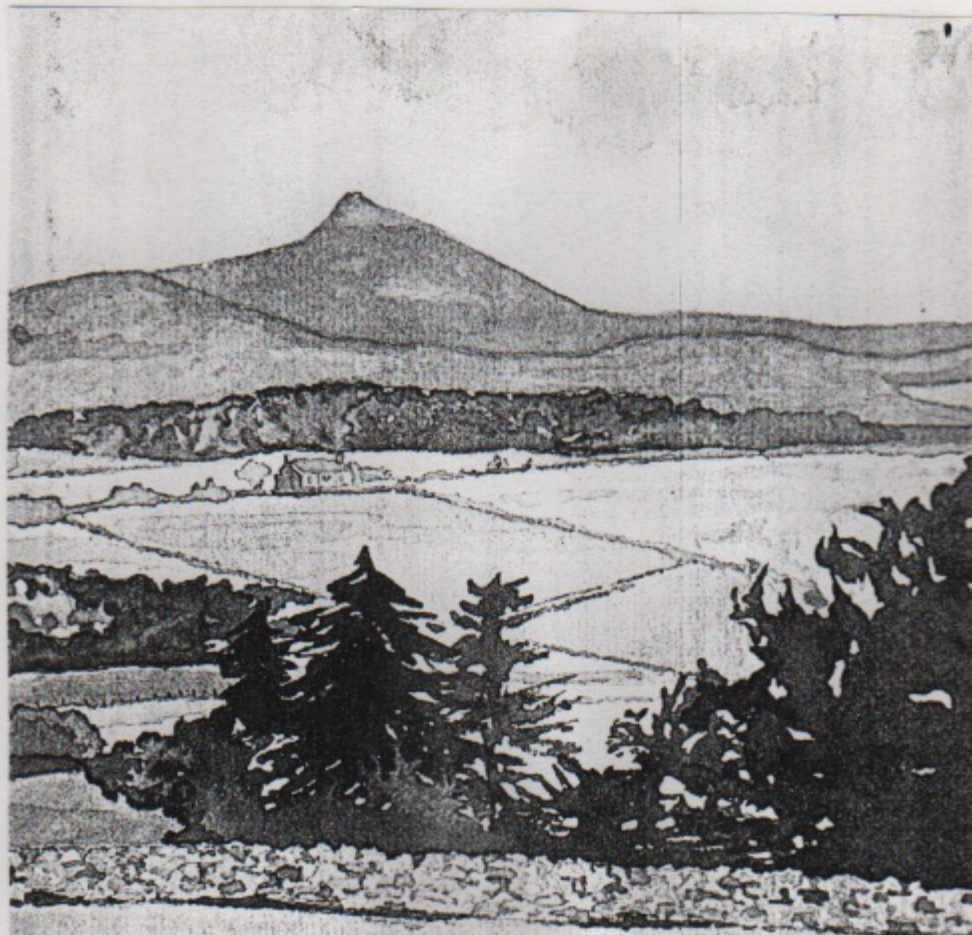


**A Submission For Assistance in the  
Production of a Video Film about the  
hills known as the Bennachie Range.  
January 1994.**

**This submission is presented to PLM Helicopters Ltd., on behalf of The Council of  
The Bailies of Bennachie, and is for assistance with the above in the form of the  
provision of an aircraft and crew for use as an aerial filming platform.**



# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**

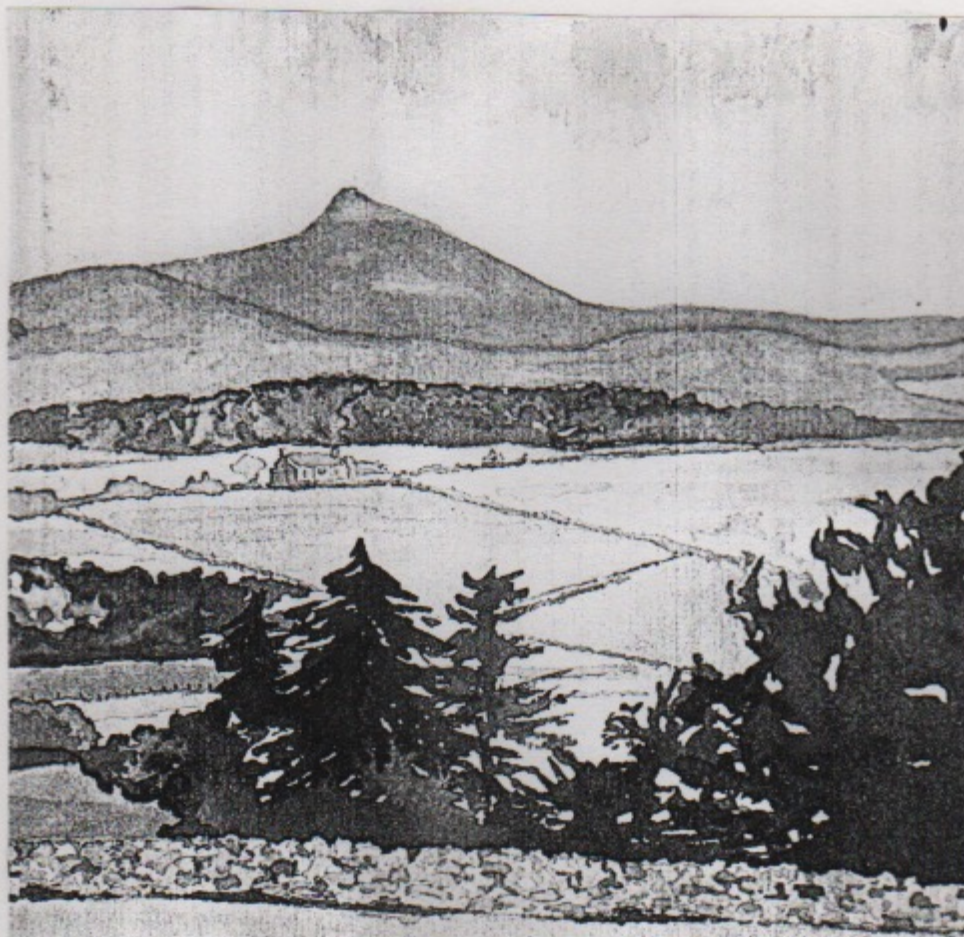


**A Submission For Assistance in the  
Production of a Video Film about the  
hills known as the Bennachie Range.  
January 1994.**

**This submission is presented to Grampian Helicopters Ltd., on behalf of The Council  
of The Bailies of Bennachie, and is for assistance with the above in the form of the  
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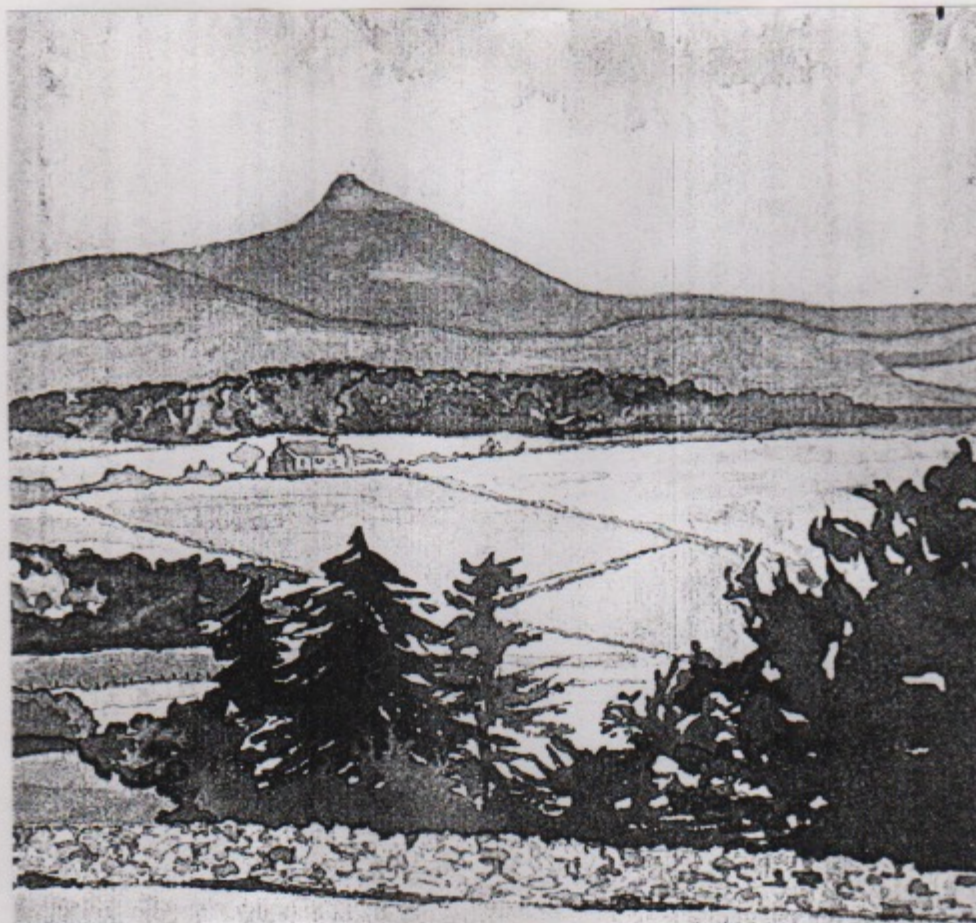


**A Submission For Assistance in the  
Production of a Video Film about the  
hills known as the Bennachie Range.  
January 1994.**

**This submission is presented to Bond Helicopters Ltd., on behalf of The Council of  
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provision of an aircraft and crew for use as an aerial filming platform.**



# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**

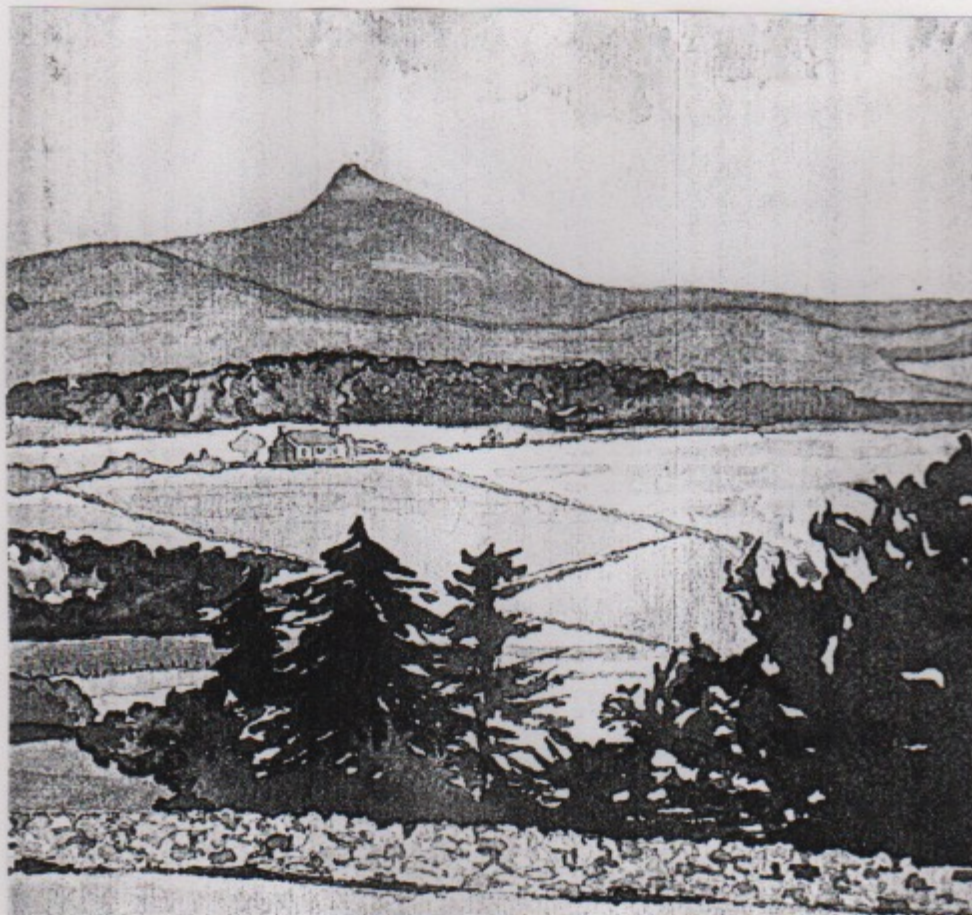


**A Submission For Assistance in the  
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hills known as the Bennachie Range.  
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**This submission is presented to British International Helicopters Ltd., on behalf of  
The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie, and is for assistance with the above in the  
form of the provision of an aircraft and crew for use as an aerial filming platform.**



# **The Bailies of Bennachie.**



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Production of a Video Film about the  
hills known as the Bennachie Range.  
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**This submission is presented to Bristows Helicopters Ltd., on behalf of The Council  
of The Bailies of Bennachie, and is for assistance with the above in the form of the  
provision of an aircraft and crew for use as an aerial filming platform.**



*Bailies of Bennachie*  
1994  
*Replacement Video Programme*

**Introduction.**

The Video is intended as a replacement for the existing and now ageing video which was prepared for the Bailies of Bennachie some years ago. The video seeks to show the viewer the many different aspects of the Hill, what life on it was like many years ago and what is happening now to conserve it and all else to do with it.

The Bailies of Bennachie is a charitable organisation with a conservation bias and has a membership of between four and five thousand people. The majority of the membership live in the local area known as 'The Garioch' but many have moved away from the area and are scattered quite literally to every corner of the world. The Council of The Bailies of Bennachie are a properly constituted and democratically elected body, and we try to keep in touch with as many of the members as we can through mail, meetings, an annual rally and various other means to tell them about what is going on on Bennachie.

The Bailies of Bennachie have been instrumental in the construction of a walk from Esson's car park for disabled people and they also assist in sponsored carries of people who express a wish to 'reach the top just one more time'. The Bailies provide work parties over weekends to help with drainage work and path repair or clearance to facilitate access and are active through its representatives on the various area committees, in ensuring continuity of responsible public access to the land in general. The Indicator atop Oxencraig (the highest point of the Hill) was provided from Bailies funds and was installed using Bailies labour.

The Bailies hold a substantial library of all matters relating to the North East of Scotland, the local area known as 'The Garioch' and in particular about the history, culture, geology and all others issues which have a relevance to the Hill of Bennachie.

Many members have been involved with us for more than twenty years now and of course, many will be nearing the end of an active life while others, including our founder Dr.Danny Gordon who founded the Bailies in May of 1973, are no longer with us. The video is very useful for many of these older folk in that it enables them to enjoy the Hill in their later years without having to suffer the exertion of actually having to climb it. The handicapped are other members of the general community who are unable to physically climb the Hill, but through the existing and to a greater extent through the new video we hope to make, they are and will be able better, to taste something of the nature of Bennachie.

The existing video is all from ground based camera work and consists of a number of sound bites with a voice over views of the flora, landmarks and environs of the Hill.

In the new video, we would like to enhance the way in which the Hill is presented and to try to create and foster, through its wider use in schools, an interest among a younger population than has hitherto been the case. In addition it is hoped that the video will form a central aspect of the interpretational work of the new Bennachie Centre, the major construction of which has recently been completed at Esson's car park at the eastern edge of the Hill.

The construction of the Centre, which will have its interpretational content complete for Summer 1995, will enable The Bailies in conjunction with the District Ranger Service to introduce the Hill and all it stands for to a far wider public than before through the use of both traditional and perhaps even Multimedia techniques. The Bailies have a number of representatives on the Board of Trustees of The Centre including it's Chairman.



Membership of The Bailies is held by a number of Shell employees at various levels within the company and an employee (who is the person seeking the assistance of the company in funding this work), is Clerk to The Society.

The video would be used in ways which are considerably different to the way the existing production is used. As well as it's more frequent use in schools as stated earlier, it will be used to provide some footage which could be used as part of the principal facet of the interpretation, conservation and education work of the Centre and which is known as 'The Gawk's Tale'.

The Bailies plan to extend their work of presenting the Hill to the public through holding evening events during which they will make various presentations to interested parties and in this, the video would be central. During the summer months, The Bailies will be mounting daytime events at the Centre for young people as part of their effort to broaden the base of interest in the Hill and in related conservation issues.

## The Production.

The Production will begin at the western end of the Gordon Way in the vicinity of the Corrie hill. The start of filming will be as a 'Father' and his 'son and daughter' begin their walk of discovery through a series of questions and answers during their walk from west to east along the Way and which will be accompanied by a mix of aerial and ground based video work with voice over by the 'Father' and input from the children. The children should be a girl and a boy of ages 8 and 16 years respectively, to imply that the Hill is a centre of interest for the youngest as well as the older child or teenager, in particular for teenage boys.

### A. General.

#### 1. The Approach.

- a. As part of the recognition for their contribution to the video production, the titles of the video could include footage of an aircraft of the aerial operator (Bond or Bristow or Grampian Helicopters) airborne and possibly even being on a tasking for another contributor (e.g. Shell) or there could be one discrete bite for each principal contributor while the titles move over the screen.
- b. As the video opens from the aircraft entering 'My Lord's Throat' the commentary would begin with a slight delay and then introduce the production while the camera takes views from the river below, up and across the northerly view generally ranging from Donview to Pond Croft.
- c. As the aircraft nears Pond Croft the view would shift to a more easterly one along the route of Birk's Burn to Mither Tap. The view will move closer to the ground as the aircraft passes above 'Fountainhead', and then focus and zoom in toward the walking party preparing to set off at a point on the Gordon Way approximately 300m north of Corrie Hill.
- d. It would be advantageous if the view from the aircraft could get as close as possible to the party without subjecting them to significant downwash from its rotor blades to preserve for the viewer, the image of the tranquillity the Hill can provide.
- e. If the view could get low enough and close enough, it could be merged with the view from a ground based video to give the impression of continuous filming in to a close up of the party.

*Helicopters operated  
Version  
(Less Shell but  
still Shell)*



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*Video production  
version of p2  
(No Shell)*



A number of helicopter operators have indicated that they may be willing to contribute to the effort of producing the video through the provision of an aircraft to act as an aerial filming platform, but the only other major potential contributor/collaborator we have approached for assistance is Shell UK Expro.

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## 2. **The Walking Party.**

- a. The party would comprise a 'father', his young 'daughter' and his teenage 'son'. All would be preparing to set off by donning proper, sensible but not overtly expensive gear.
- b. They would start by chatting about the day's weather very briefly but then focus their talk fairly quickly onto the route they were going to take along the Gordon Way.
- c. Both the children would be really inquisitive 'little people' but the 'father' would be quite a patient sort, again reflecting the nature of the Hill.
- d. Throughout the walk the children will more or less take it in turns to ask 'Dad' questions about the;

- i. flora,
- ii. fauna,
- iii. geology,
- iv. past and present industry,
- v. legend,
- vi. recreation including a brief aerial 'walk' up each of the principal routes,
- vii. history including the significant historical events, e.g. the commony, mass trespass,
- viii. landmarks, e.g. waterspout, gawk stane, thieves mark, fog house and waterfall,
- ix. problems that recreation and tourism bring in their wake,
- x. measures put in place to mitigate the less desirable effects of tourism and recreation,
- xi. significant events, e.g. aircraft crashes, dedication of the plantings,
- xii. Bennachie Centre, it's purpose, residents, contents, and what they each do,
- xiii. request for assistance in conserving the Hill and all it stands for,

of the hill.

## 3. **Ground Work.**

- a. Video work taking place from a ground based camera would be quite extensive and would deal with the detail of almost all the coverage. For example, it would plainly be impossible for an aircraft to give close in views of the waterfall or of the cup 'n saucer stone. However Harthill's Cave, would be ideal as the penultimate to the climax of the aerial 'walk' from Nursery Cottage.
- b. Ground work would typically take over from the aircraft as soon as the view from it closed in to a reasonably short distance of say, 100 metres from the objective. This would enable images to be merged at similar ranges and for the ground camera to zoom in until a closer shot was merged to deal with the detail.

## 4. **Aerial Work.**

- a. Aerial work will form the matrix which links all the separate elements of the ground based coverage together. It will follow the party from their setting out until they reach their transport at Esson's car park.
- b. As the youngsters ask their questions and 'Dad' answers or as 'Dad' starts to tell them something without it being prompted by a question the aircraft will take over filming from above their position on the Gordon Way and go off to the site of that about which the question has been asked or the point made.
- c. As well as forming the linking matrix, as it leaves the party and is in transit to the objective the aerial work should seek to locate the topic or landmark for the viewer, in relation to the Hill.
- d. The final act of the aerial function will be to film the party as they leave and then to film the position of the Hill in relation to 'The Garioch' as a whole.



## **B. Topic Details.**

### **1. Flora.**

There are colonies of uncommon plants including a large variety of mosses, on the Hill. One or two colonies represent the most northerly or easterly colonies of the particular species and as such are afforded protection by FE and by private foresters and landowners by agreement. The Bailies have representatives who work on their behalf on various committees and working groups with conservation projects in mind. Other colonies of flora represent the sole examples of a particular species on the Bennachie range.

The whole of the required video work for this detail can be done on the Hill.

### **2. Fauna.**

Capercaillie -

Deer -

Ptarmigan -

Grouse -

Buzzard -

Wildcat -

The Hill is home to a few protected uncommon species breeding sites and the Capercaillie is showing a small comeback with a moderate increase in reported sightings. Sightings of Wildcat have diminished but there is still evidence of their existence. Deer and Grouse are frequently sighted and Ptarmigan have been seen on one or two occasions in the recent past.

If footage from the actual hill is deemed impractical or too expensive to set up for, video footage of suitably enclosed Zoological specimens may be used. The filming or disclosure of actual nesting sites and points of mark which may be used to locate any conservationally sensitive sites will be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to the work.

### **3. Geology.**

The Hill is comprised of a plateau at around 400m elevation topped by seven discrete summits the highest of which is Oxencraig at 529m. Although Oxencraig is the highest point, the next highest summit of Mither Tap is widely perceived as the principal summit because the perspective from which the Hill is most often viewed gives the impression that it is the higher of the two.

The Hill is a batholith of igneous rock which was thrown up from within the Earth. When it was first thrown up, it was covered by vegetation and softer rock, much of which has been eroded from the higher points by wind and weather over the aeons. The exposed rock has been further eroded by the elements creating weird structures, some of which are unstable.

There are places on the Hill where there are examples of minerals of worth being found.

The vast majority of the coverage will be from the air. Where there is a need to impress scale or the precarious nature of some of the eroded rock structures, ground based work would take place.



#### 4. Industry past and present.

Industry on Bennachie has been known for many, many years. Forestry on a truly commercial scale is only a fairly recent addition to the list of ways in which wealth or a living has been garnered on the Hill.

##### i. Forestry.

In the early part of this century woodlands began to be planted by the Forestry Commission using various coniferous species. The plantations were arranged so that land coverage was rotated and the optimum mix of tree types was growing at any one time. This process of planning out a way of planting trees such that the crop grows well and economically has been much refined until nowadays, Forest Enterprise which is the commercial arm of the Forestry Commission, develops a Forest Design Plan which considers the Hill in its entirety and may cover a period of time as long as forty or fifty years.

There is a move toward planting a greater proportion of deciduous and native types of trees, reducing the percentage of land on the Hill covered by coniferous species.

As well as the original landowners there are now numerous other owners of tracts of land on the Hill and each may retain a different Forestry Company to do the actual work. This is particularly the case at the west end of the Hill from Corrie Hill to Bruntwood Tap although because of the controls on planting, even this takes place in a broadly coordinated manner.

##### ii. Peat.

Peat cutting has both provided warmth for hill dwellers and later, wealth for the landowners. Most of the plateau has been used for the extraction of peat but more especially the area which lies between Oxencraig and Mither Tap has always been a good producing area. There remain depressions at various places which form pools in the wet times and which were formed as a result of peat workings.

While there were hill dwellers, the peat was available free to those who needed and wished to cut it, but once the landowners took over the Hill, they felt it necessary to hire someone who would ensure that anyone cutting peat did so responsibly and for due payment. This man was called the Moss Grieve and the small rise properly known as Averon Knap, came to be known as the 'Moss Grieve' because he often used it as a vantage point from which to ensure all on his masters' land was well.

The peat was cut, left to drain a little and then taken off the Hill in hand carts, by carrying it or by horse drawn cart. There were various routes used for this and there remain the skeletons of three of them to this day. One is along the purported route of the Maiden's Causeway, another is the track which runs north west from Little Oxencraig and the third is the track which runs around the west and south sides of black hill down toward Pond Croft.

##### iii. Granite.

Quarrying is a trade which took place at many points on the hill. Wherever the rock came close enough to the surface to be exposed in sufficient quantity and quality to make working it worthwhile, men were prepared to sweat to extract it. The remnants of many quarries exist still, and the workings can be seen clearly.

English quarry is a good example of this industry but there are others like those on Little Oxencraig and scattered around which can still be seen granite lintels abandoned when working at the site stopped.

The work was very hard and it must have been very difficult for the quarrymen to get up and go up to the Hill in all weathers to make a living in one of the toughest occupations there is. Not only was the weather responsible for making their lives very uncomfortable, but also the very nature of the rock could conspire in an instant to bring the result of all their labours to nought if the rock should split due to a previously unseen flaw.

As with peat, the granite was removed from the Hill along the roads which had been cut into the surface.



iv. Sport.

It is not many years since shooting last took place on the Hill, but it is many years since there were large organised parties of guns. The remains of many shooting butts can still be seen particularly at the west end of the Hill. They lie in a line roughly running north north east from the area of Pond Croft up toward and beyond Black Hill toward Hermit Seat, and they can still give shelter to a walker caught out by the sudden onset of bad weather.

5. Legend.

There are many legends based on and around the Hill. Some tell the tale of Jock o' Bennachie, a giant who was constantly at war with Jock O' Noth who inhabited the Hill lying north and slightly west of Bennachie and known as Tap o' Noth. The two used to hurl boulders at each other but who could be the best of friends when either of them needed the help of the other, especially as when our Jock went to London where he fell in love with the King's daughter and was clapped in prison by the dreadful English!! He is said to lie somewhere below the Hill waiting for someone to find the key which releases him.

Other legends involve the Devil trying to tempt a young lassie and resulting in the Maiden Stone, a soldier from the Harlaw battles who died of a broken heart on the Hill, and numerous others.

Approximately 50% of the work to film the legends of the Hill can be done from the ground.

6. Recreation.

The Hill provides a vital centre for hillwalkers and naturalists alike. Mountain bikers have access to certain parts of the Hill and many climbing clubs for older people regularly use the Hill as not only a place to ramble around for interest but also as good exercise for those who are becoming less fit than they used to be.

It has often been said in 'The Garioch', that the ultimate skiing experience is to cross country ski the smooth plateau on a winters night and visiting each of the seven summits in turn when the snow lies thick and smooth over the heather.

Many of the local schools use Bennachie as part of their educational activities including Inverurie Academy which sends its first year pupils to the nearby Sir Arthur Grant School and from their base there they visit and ramble on Bennachie as part of an exercise to break down barriers between any of the children who do not know many others.

Although it is discouraged, there are small rock climbs which people have been seen to scale just 'keeping their hand in'.

7. History.

In recent history the Hill has always been a provider of livings for rich and poor alike. Ancient peoples as well as those from the 18th and 19th and early 20th centuries lived on the Hill and their existence is witnessed by the discovery of numerous artefacts, hut circles, burial places, forts, cairns, etc. which have been found in, on and around the Hill.

The last inhabitants lived on the Hill during the early part of this century and they were the last of a line of hill dwellers with roots thousands of years into the past. At the time of the Commonalty there were many families in an established community which has come to be known as the 'Colony'. Much of the remains of the Colony have now been freed from the grip of the forest and are accessible for visitors to see, but hopefully not to climb over! It is a dream of some to see at least one or two buildings in the colony being restored to the state they would have been in when they were occupied all those years ago.

Other parts of the Colony remain hidden among the trees of the forest. Some parts are merely shaded by the trees, but are still accessible and these include a very impressive road which runs west south west from the northern edge of 'Boghead of Tullos' or Esson's Croft as it is more widely known.



Aerial work would be particularly appropriate for the detail of the exposed Colony. From the air, the outlines of the various buildings and its siting immediately adjacent to the Gordon Way would become immediately apparent to the viewer.

The hidden and shaded parts of the Colony would have to be filmed from the ground with a camera having good low light response.

#### 8. Landmarks.

The Hill features many points of particular interest. Some of them linked to a specific event or time, or with a legend. There are others however which are simply there, and simply exist without there being any known cause or reason for it to be so.

The features include such ones as;

i. The 'Gawk Stane' (or 'Cuckoo Stone'), which is a permanent reminder of those landowners who sought to evict those who lived on the Hill so that it could be exploited without hindrance or consideration of dwellers on it. The stane bears the marks of the principal players in the scenario. All across the Hill there are other examples of stones planted and which bear the marks of the landowners whose boundaries run through that point including the 'Thieves Mark' at the summit of Mither Tap.

ii. The 'Cup n' Saucer Stone' lies not far to the north of the Gordon Way and just south east of Esson's Croft. The reason why the stone should be shaped as it is has never been found. Its shape which roughly resembles what its name talks about, could not have been caused through erosion and there are no marks of where someone might have worked it with tools. Many have tried to work out how it came to be shaped the way it is but no-one has ever produced a plausible explanation.

iii. 'Little John's Length', is a strip of land which overlooks the Pittodrie Estate who are a principal landowner of the modern hill. It is formed by two cairns, the existence of which was recorded many, many years ago. The distance between the cairns which runs along a north south ridge above the path from Rowantree car park on the northern slopes of the Hill is said to represent the height of Jock o' Bennachie and is said also to be where he regularly slept.

iv. 'English Quarry' lies almost on the Gordon Way immediately south of Quarry Hill. This was the site of one of the busiest granite quarries on the Hill. There are many quarries scattered all over the Hill. At some of the quarries there are poignant reminders of how hard it must have been to go up to the Hill every day in all weathers and hew from the earth such massive granite lintels as one can see still, scattered over the area where they were abandoned on the last day of work taking place there all those years ago.

v. 'Moss Grieve' which is properly named Averon Knap, is a small promontory which lies just east of Oxencraig. It derives its name from its use as a point from which the Moss Grieve could observe most of the peat cutters on the plateau. He was the man who was responsible for ensuring that peat extraction from the moss at that height was all done fairly and squarely (fairly and squarely for the landowner that is)!

vi. 'Harthill's Cave' lies on the steep northern end of Craigshannoch. It is the cave in which the Laird of Harthill took refuge and from where he watched his castle of Harthill to the north of the Hill, being sacked and burnt as first payment and then revenge for his refusal to pay his taxes.

vii. 'The Waterspout', which is properly named West Hall Gill, is a steep sided ravine which runs north from a point between Craigshannoch and Little Oxencraig. The ravine was created by a sudden and very intense downpour of water which ran off the plateau and drained down the northern slope, eroding the surface of the Hill at that point.

viii. 'Monymusk Triangle', is a small triangle of land which is the only portion of the Hill that was acquired by the Laird of Monymusk during the time of the Commonty, or division of the Hill, between the landowners. It lies to the south of Mither Tap and remains to this day as a clearly defined triangle having its base closest to the summit of Mither Tap. It remains as such because



of an alleged disagreement about it never being planted. The triangle is in fact a wonderful oasis of clear and very attractive land situated between areas of intensive forestation.

ix. 'Fog House' lying just into the tree line to the south west of Pittodrie House is a folly structure which overlooks what is thought to be the only real waterfall on the Hill. The Fog House is very well hidden among the trees and needs careful navigation (and walking), to find it but once there, and given the right conditions, it can appear like a little fairy tale kingdom all of its own. The waterfall drops some four or five metres over a sharp cut down into a small pool which then drains away to the east through the trees.

x. 'Mither Tap Fort', Often compared to a recumbent female form, this is the summit of the seven which is often wrongly thought of as being the highest one. The fort structure is clearly visible and has to be walked through to reach the top. A massive rock construction encloses the summit on the east and north with the natural structure of the summit forming the west and south fortification. The structure was put there thousands of years ago and unfortunately is now suffering the effects of tourism and recreation. There are measures being actively sought now to try to preserve what remains whilst still allowing public access to what is a vital Scottish heritage site.

xi. Indicators are situated on the top of Mither Tap and Oxencraig and each was installed by The Bailies of Bennachie.

xii. 'Maiden's Causeway', although the exact route of the ancient way itself is as yet undetermined, is thought to run from Stay Knowe, to the west of Pittodrie House, up to the west side of Mither Tap. Again, it is not known who constructed this causeway which in days gone by was used to haul carts of peat and granite down the Hill. Load carrying vehicular traffic up the causeway consisted mainly of day trippers from Aberdeen in days gone by. They would travel to Pitcaple by railway and then transfer to horse drawn carriage for the journey up the Hill stopping at Hosie's Well on the way up for a picnic. The route of what is currently referred to as being the causeway is becoming less distinct because of the high numbers of hillwalkers causing the edges of it to become eroded and the boulders from it being moved to other areas of the path.

xiii. 'Hosie's Well', lies 1000m east of Craigshannoch and is on the Maiden's Causeway. It is a frequent resting place for walkers ascending from Rowantree car park, and is where those carriage passengers in the old days used to stop for their Sunday lunch dressed in their very finest attire. This is the site of the legend of Hosie who was a local boy who fought bravely in the wars against the highlanders in the mid 15th century. He left his bride to be to go and fight the highlanders at the Battle of Harlaw, the site of which can be seen from the northern slopes of the Hill.

Of course, he was captured and taken away into captivity to be released some years later. On his return home, he found that his love had believed him dead and had become married to another. It is at the site of Hosie's Well where he is said to have been buried after dying of a broken heart and where his tears began the well flowing, never to stop. Despite its elevation and the heat of a hot summer day, the well has allegedly never been seen to be dry!

9. Problems that recreation and tourism bring in their wake.

Inevitably, as more people become interested in the world outside they put greater pressure on it. In this sense there is a very real danger that visitors to the Hill could destroy the very thing they have come to enjoy. This has to be avoided at all costs. The Bailies of Bennachie have taken part in many initiatives to preserve the fabric and amenity of the Hill.

Erosion, litter and vandalism are the principal problems associated with increased pedestrian traffic on the Hill. In a few cases, motorcycles have been seen on the paths, but as this is in any event illegal, and as a cause of irritation, damage and noise pollution, it can be dealt with through recourse to the law.



The Bailies are active on the Bennachie Working Group which exists to protect the Hill from inappropriate development and exploitation.

Ground based work can deal with some detail like litter and vandalism. Aerial work is best placed to highlight the problem of paths being widened and vegetation and ground covering often being damaged beyond repair. In some instances, paths tend to migrate down the slope that they may be on. Examples of this and other damage could be picked up by the aircraft on the ascent from Back o' Bennachie to just below Little Oxencraig and on the path from Rowantree up to Mither Tap at the stepping stones below Little John's Length.

10. Measures in place to mitigate the less desirable effects of recreation and tourism.

The Bailies frequently act as litter pickers as have some ad hoc groups e.g. offenders as part of their rehabilitation training. Signs have been posted to encourage a tidy approach to being on the Hill. The Gordon District Council, The Bailies and FE collaborate on the organisation and execution of path repair and drainage projects. Helicopters have been used within the last year for the first time in aiding path repair parties. A specialist company was hired some years ago to carry out major repairs on the route adjacent to The Maiden's Causeway.

Special mountain bike trails have been constructed at sites at Pitfichie, across the River Don from the main hill although they are welcomed if they keep to the forest roads and avoid riding on the pedestrian paths on Bennachie.

This topic would be dealt with in the same coverage as for the problems themselves as outlined in number 9 above.

11. Significant events.

There are many events which have been significant for Bennachie.

- i. The Commonalty or division of the Hill when the dwellers were dispossessed of their livelihood and homes by the rich landowners.
- ii. The mass trespass which took place early this century.
- iii. The separate crashes on Bennachie of two Royal Air Force aircraft, including the possibility even now, of recovering parts from the second one.
- iv. The plantings which were made and dedicated in memory of the founder of The Bailies of Bennachie, Dr Danny Gordon, and a close associate of his, Rev.Dr.James Wood. These are two separate but adjacent areas of new woodland names, 'Dr.Danny Gordon's Widdie' and 'Rev.Dr.James Wood's Plantin'. These were planted in April 1994 and dedicated on the evening of the 1994 Annual Rally.
- v. The Bailies Annual Rally takes place on the second Sunday of August at the Back o' Bennachie car park on the northern edge of the Hill.
- vi. A young man from the village of Oyne went missing many years ago and despite extensive searches, was not found for some considerable time. He was eventually found dead, on one of the summits and as a mark of respect, the local inhabitants raised a small monument in his honour. He was an ordinary lad who was well liked by everyone. However, his family did not think the gesture to be appropriate as well as objecting to not having been asked to contribute to the cost of the monument, and so the monument was destroyed but the slot cut into the rock and in which it stood until it was toppled, remains clearly visible on that summit.

Nowadays, there is a well practised and occasionally well used system for conducting searches on the Hill for anyone who may have got into difficulties. Bennachie may look very inviting but like any other high place, it can be a capricious place.

The weather must always be watched for any turning for the worse, for in the space of both a short time and distance one can move from a temperate to an arctic environment.

There are many salutary tales of illness and injury on Bennachie which those who have suffered them will never forget!!



12. The Bennachie Centre.

The Centre is a £425,000 development at the Esson's car park at the eastern end of the Hill. It is a joint venture between The Bailies of Bennachie, Gordon District Council, Grampian Enterprise Ltd., and Forest Enterprise. Its aim is to provide an interpretational centre for the Hill and its environs.

The Centre will permit relevant conservation issues to be brought to a wider public than before and in a way which will enable younger people to more easily assimilate all the various aspects of Bennachie into their lives.

The Centre affords us the chance to appeal to a younger population through its use as a base both by The Bailies and by the Ranger Service and from which they can mount ongoing educational programmes as well as one off presentations, either at The Centre or off-site at schools or other appropriate venues.

The Centre will house the extensive library of The Bailies as well as the resources available to the Ranger Service and the interpretational content which will include, multimedia presentations, diorama, photographic and written records, video and audio presentations and relics from the Hill and from the events which have taken place on it over the years, its history and culture in song, music and poetry.

The Centre will cover all the aspects of the Hill including that of safety.

13. The Appeal.

The appeal will be for physical assistance from volunteer helpers to help man The Centre; for new recruits to The Bailies to help with work parties on the Hill; for simple financial assistance; and for any other help people can give to help in maintaining a safe and satisfactory state of repair on the Hill.

Paul Stallard and Clare Smith.

Clerk to The Bailies of Bennachie and Council Members.

December 29 1994.