

Isla's Essay On 'Why I Like Bennachie'

THE Bailies of Bennachie recently held an essay competition for sixth and seventh year pupils of Gordon District Primary Schools on "Why I Like Bennachie."

Published below is the winning essay by Isla Salter of Primary Vlld, Kemnay School.

I like Bennachie for a number of reasons. The first is because it has a very distinctive shape and as it is one of the highest hills about here. I know I am nearing home when I see the familiar shape in the distance. I like Bennachie because it is an exciting hill. It was once an underground volcano and, who knows, it might erupt again one day. The huge rocks all down the slopes have been thrown off and our Pictish ancestors made use of them to make a fort on the Mither Tap.

Bennachie is also my weather chart. I see it from my bedroom window and if it is a nice, purple/blue colour I know it will be a nice day, but, if I look out and it has disappeared in mist, then rain is sure to follow.

PANORAMIC

Bennachie is a good hill to climb—not too steep but hard enough to climb to make the beautiful panoramic view from the top worth all the effort of getting there.

On the way to the top there is something to look at and enjoy every bit of the way. There are many different kinds of trees, plants and flowers with masses of heather just now. You can see deer, hares, rabbits and birds if you walk quietly. There are blue berries and cranberries to pick and eat. Just when you get very hot and thirsty you find a small burn or spring to quench your thirst and paddle your feet in on a hot day. We saw a small frog once in a burn high up Bennachie.

Bennachie is also special to me as my Granda was a forester

and helped to plant the trees that are growing on the lower slopes of the hill. He was very sad when they were nearly all burned in the big fire on Bennachie. He had to stay on the hill two nights and two days to fight the fire and to make sure it didn't catch fire again.

PICNICS

Bennachie caters for everyone from children to old people and tourists to men earning a living from it. There are car parks and play areas for those who are too old or too young to climb the hill. There are also picnic tables and seats where you can have a picnic before you go up the hill or when you come down, hungry and thirsty. There is a restaurant with home made meals, ice cream and cold drinks. For those who don't like picnics there is a Craft Shop selling local made pottery. The woman who makes the pottery lives near me and when I am going to school I see her busy making things to sell at her Craft Shop.

The Bailies of Bennachie are a group of men who love Bennachie and have made possible the lovely walks all over the hill so we can enjoy Bennachie even more.

I hope Bennachie never erupts again as I like it just the way it is.

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