

# Bailies Open New Centre At Town Hall

THE Bailies of Bennachie have attained a long-standing ambition and have opened a room in Inverurie Town Hall as a library, information office, museum and shop.

It opened earlier this week and the Bailies have rented it for a year. They will open it daily from 10a.m. - 12 noon and from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. probably until the end of September - perhaps a little longer.

The premises are being manned six days a week on a voluntary basis by Bailies themselves.

Clerk to the Committee Mrs Helen Fraser said "About three years ago we set in motion the idea of having a room of our own. It has finally been achieved. We couldn't find suitable premises before but now the town hall has been renovated we have eventually found somewhere.

"We will be able to house our collection of books there. We have a large number about Bennachie and the surrounding area which have been donated over the years. I have had them at home and any of the Bailies have been more than welcome to come and look at them but obviously it wasn't the ideal situation. However now anyone interested can come and browse through them on the premises".

Books, postcards and various other publications about Bennachie will be available for sale and fairly soon a selection of photographs will be on display.

"We have some very old photographs dating back to the end of last century - the beginning of this century." explained Mrs Fraser.

"They were donated to us from a lady in Milwaukee. They came to us via America as they

had been inherited by the niece of a late Bailie of Bennachie. We were delighted to get them and will mount some of the best of them to make a permanent exhibition."

"The real reason for having the room is to allow the Bailies and anyone else interested access to the books and also to provide information for all those interested including visitors to the area as well as locals. It is not exclusively for the Bailies but for anyone interested," she emphasised.

"We are certainly not on a membership drive. We have 2680 members at present. Some from all over the world. When we started in 1973 we thought that if we got about 100 members each paying £1 for life membership we would be doing well."

The Bailies of Bennachie is a conservation society and was set up to help preserve the hill and to fight vandalism and litter. They also collect folklore and look after the paths and amenities.

The society is run by a council of members elected annually plus all the landowners and the Conservator, East Scotland, Forestry Commission. Through the medium of the Bailies all developments taking place on Bennachie can be discussed and notice taken of the interests of all parties.

The Bailies have published very useful guides and books on Bennachie and the surrounding area - all of which make very interesting reading.

Anyone wishing to find out more about becoming a Bailie should contact Mrs Helen Fraser, Templar Croft, Aquhythie, Inverurie. -Tel. Kemnay 42372. 10/5/84