

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1996

NEWS



The Bailies of Bennachie held their 26th picnic in Oyne recently. Pictured are some of the current Bailies. They are (left to right) Raymond Bisset, Colin Millar, Algy Watson, James McKay and (front left to right) Dr Geoffrey Gill, and senior Bailie John Nicol.

Bailies 26th^{23rd} picnic attracts over 300

OVER 300 people flocked to the 26th Bailies of Bennachie picnic held in bright sunshine at Oyne recreation ground near the Back o' Bennachie car park last weekend.

The crowd was welcomed by senior bailie Algy Watson of Oyne who also welcomed Aberdeenshire Council's convener and vice-convener, Dr Colin Millar and Councilor Raymond Bisset.

Dr Millar, dressed in a MacDonald of Clan Ranald kilt, told the crowd he was honoured to live at the foot of Bennachie and to be councillor for West Garioch — although he regretted that Mither Tap had been moved into the Kincardine and Deeside constituency and is no longer in his ward.

Dr Millar's address covered the footpaths of Bennachie and he said there was a great deal of activity on Bennachie.

In 1988 85,000 people climbed Bennachie but since the West Gordon Way opened the figure has increased by 100,000.

Dr Millar explained that forest walks can be dangerous and annual repair work is necessary.

He recognised that footpaths on the hill can be seen for miles around but said he is sure the heather will heal the scars.

And he revealed that European cash will be used to put up information boards and enable the bailies to monitor the number of people on the hill.

Senior bailie John Nicol summed up by highlighting how special Bennachie was as a mountain.

Many people, basking in the sunshine, stayed for hours listening to the fiddle and accordion music of Andy Duff, Donald Hunter, Ian Coutts and Neil Hehir.



Enjoying their tea at the Bailies of Bennachie picnic at the weekend were Katie Bain, 2, and Simone Saint, 6, who are watched by their parents.



Admiring the new Bailies of Bennachie 1997 calendar are Jean Witts and Joan Raffan.