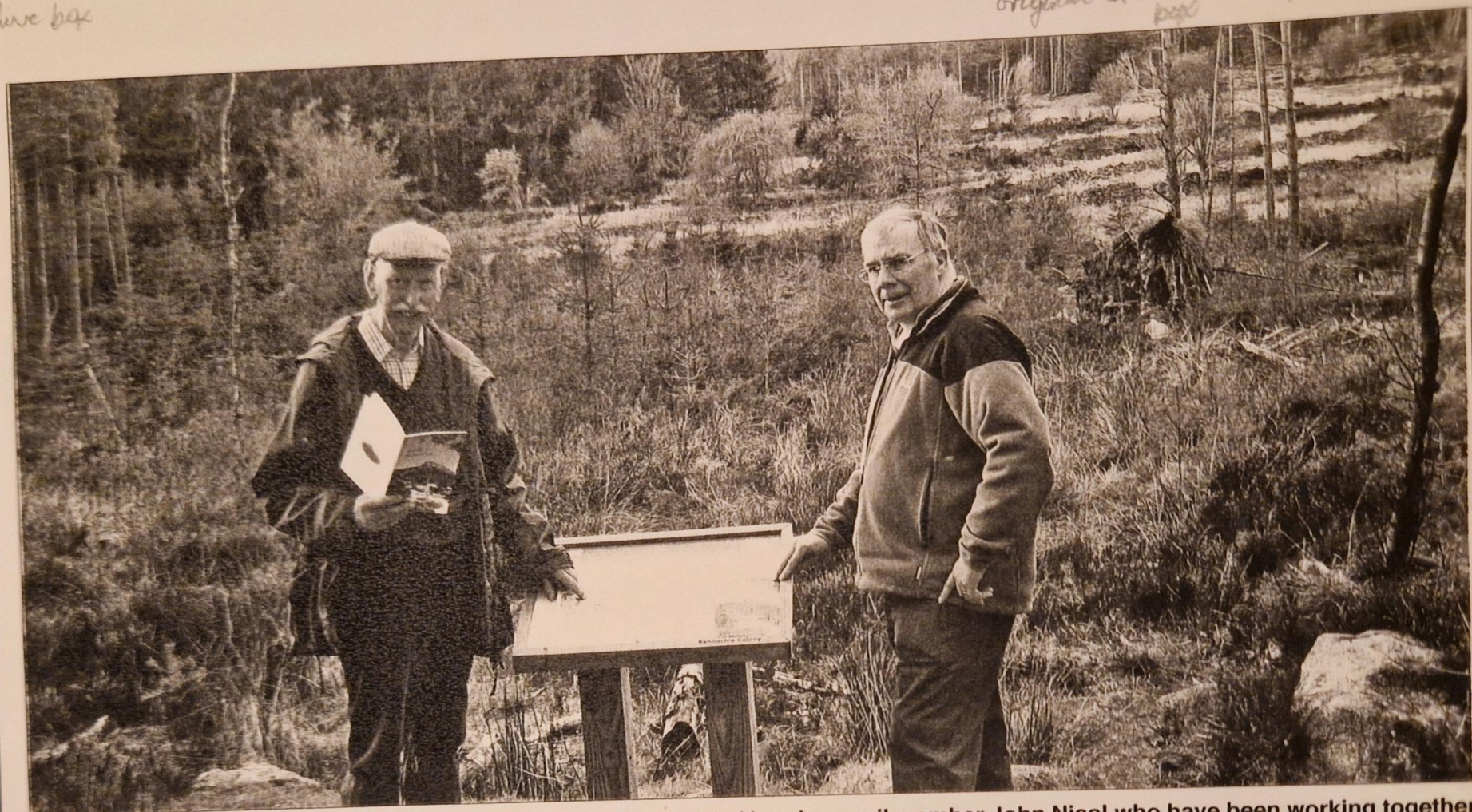


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Stewards of the hill: Founder Bailie of Bennachie James MacKay (left) and council member John Nicol who have been working together to completely revise the Guide to Bennachie book. Photograph by Griselda McGregor

## Bailies launch complete guide to Bennachie

**AS THE** Bailies of Bennachie approach their 40th anniversary, a colourful and newly revised version of the Guide to Bennachie has been published and has proved a very welcome addition to many households, both local and farther afield.

Whether for the serious hill-walker, gentle rambler, ornithologist, botanist, landscape and fauna photographer, school teacher and pupil or general wildlife watcher the book makes an ideal companion.

Dedicated to the late Lord Forbes, guardian of Bennachie, the book is the result of years of work by dedicated Bennachie bailies James MacKay and John Nicol who are responsible for this revised edition which includes an up to the minute map of the mountain and surrounding terrain tucked in its back

and not so well-known landmarks on the blue hill, the list of contents is comprehensive.

It includes Bennachie's history geographically and socially from the time of early man around 2000 BC, its battles, castles, details of agricultural methods, the colony and lifestyle of the colonists up to air crashes during World War 2.

Modern times are meticulously categorised in suggested routes for walkers (ambitious or easy-going) and there are descriptions of the many summits in the Bennachie range, its plants, flowers and fungi both woodland and upland and the resident wildlife, all of which combine to make Bennachie a microcosm of biodiversity.

Life-long lover and walker of the hill James MacKay discovered when he embarked on the very first guide book many years ago that existing paths were

But over the years the path network has increased significantly and been brought up to a high standard.

He has twice revised the guide but has been aware in recent years of the need for a complete and more radical revision and voiced his opinion to the Bailies of Bennachie council.

Accordingly he was helped in his project by council member John Nicol and senior bailie Jackie Cumberbirch who has the experience of working for the Forestry Commission Scotland.

Commenting James said: "It has meant a lot of research – and walking about the hill but I think we have both enjoyed it and are pleased with the result.

"It's nice that it has been published in this 40th anniversary year for the Bailies of Bennachie."

The new guide has been printed by Peters Design