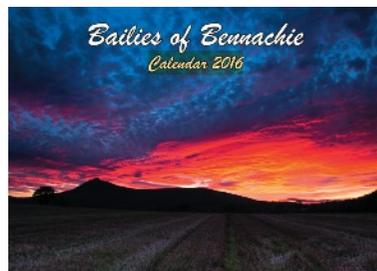


## 2016 CALENDAR

Our 2016 calendar is now on sale. The price is £5.10 including p&p. Discount for multiple copies. To order, use the contact details below or call me on 01467 643735. Profits from the sale of the calendar and books go towards continuing our work on Bennachie.



by Ann Baillie

Calling all talented photographers - please send us your photos of Bennachie for consideration for the next calendar. We are particularly interested in photos of dogs on Bennachie because this is likely to be the theme for the 2017 calendar. Please use contact details below to send in your photos.

## PUBLICATIONS

**New book** 'Bennachie Landscapes Series: 3. Bennachie and the Garioch: Society and Ecology in the History of North-east Scotland' will be published soon. The book provides an informative update on the work of the Bennachie Landscapes Project.

Price - £10. Postage - £1.20.

To order your copy (and/or books 1 and 2) please use the contact details below.

The recent guide to Bennachie is also available. Price - £5.00

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Bailies of Bennachie AGM followed by a talk from Dr Gordon Noble 'Bennachie and Tap o'Noth Uncovered using 3D Lidar Scanning'

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September. 7.30pm. Acorn Centre, Inverurie.**

The Council needs new members. Why not get involved!

All Bailies events are listed on the calendar page on our website.

## CONTACT US

Write to us: Bailies of Bennachie, PO Box 11535, Huntly. AB54 9AD

Website: [www.bailiesofbennachie.co.uk](http://www.bailiesofbennachie.co.uk)

Email: [bailiesofbennachie@mail.com](mailto:bailiesofbennachie@mail.com)

Facebook : Bailies of Bennachie



Charity No SC 013298



## 2015 Newsletter

### ANNUAL UPDATE

by Jackie Cumberbirch. Senior Bailie

The Bailies have been busy. We've continued to research the landscape, run work parties once a month, held a variety of events and responded to planning applications affecting Bennachie. A very big thank you to everyone who's helped during the year.

**The Bennachie Landscapes Project.** Colin Shepherd worked with the field archaeology group at the Tillymuck hut circles and Drumminoir Castle. The group, along with pupils from Kemnay Academy, helped with a small dig at the Back o' Bennachie. Colin continues to work with Keig Primary School. Recently we attended an interesting meeting with like-minded community groups working on hill-forts near Sheffield and Cardiff. Aberdeen University has nearly finished 'The Bennachie Colony' report.

**Events.** We ran a variety of events throughout the year. Willow Lohr inspired young people with four days 'Life on the Wild Side'. By popular request she came back to run two further tracking events for adults in the spring. Alan Melrose from Walk Deeside ran two well attended navigation courses.

Many Bailies enjoyed the ceilidh in October and the Doric night in May. In September we were involved with two enjoyable music pieces. The 'Maiden Stone' opera, written by Joe Stollery and directed by Peter Stollery, was performed in the woods by students of music and children from local primary schools. 'Whispers in the Woods' by Petra Vergunst was a combination of music and poems.

**Work parties.** On the next page there is a report from Harry Leil about the work parties. We often have 15 enthusiasts helping take good care of Bennachie. Our new tool shed at the Bennachie Centre helps greatly because we can keep all our tools in one place.

## ANNUAL UPDATE cont

**Planning Issues.** The Bailies respond to planning applications that will have an impact on Bennachie. Like many others, we objected to the application for wind turbines at Cornabo, but after appeal the application was approved by the Scottish Government's reporter. The latest twist is that the MOD is launching a legal challenge to the reporter's decision. We are also keeping an eye on Transport Scotland's proposals for dualling the A96 - option C takes a new route close to Bennachie. We have put information on our website and facebook page for you to consider and give your feedback.

**Is Bennachie special?** Although small sites on Bennachie are protected for their historical or nature conservation features, most of the hill is not protected. We've started discussions with planning officers in Aberdeenshire Council to see whether a designation could give the iconic landscape of Bennachie better protection, because we want the hill to be enjoyed by future generations. We are expecting Aberdeenshire Council to initiate a consultation about this fairly soon. However we'd like to know the views of our members.

**Please tell us what you think.** Contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

## BENNACHIE LANDSCAPES PROJECT by Ken Ledingham

Aberdeen University made six banners describing the work of the Bennachie Landscapes Project. The banners have been on display in various locations including the Bennachie Centre, libraries in Inverurie Kemnay, Aberdeen and Oldmeldrum, the Kemnay Church Centre, Kemnay Academy and Aberdeen University, the Inverurie Garden Centre, Touched by Scotland, the City Council HQ at Woodhill House and the Shire Council HQ at Gordon House. If you want to find out more about the project, the banners will be on display at Touched by Scotland, the Kellockbank Emporium, Castle Fraser and the Aberdeen University library later this year.

We gave talks about the project to the Bailies AGM and the Garioch Heritage Society. We have also been asked to give a talk to the Alford Heritage Society in October and at Aberdeen University in September.

If you know of a group that would like a talk about the project, or know of a venue interested in displaying the banners, then please contact me at [ken-ledingham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ken-ledingham@tiscali.co.uk).

## BAILIES WORK PARTIES

by Harry Leil

The Bailies work parties, organised by Mick Taylor and Harry Leil, had another busy year. We carried out a variety of work on the hill in conjunction with Forestry Commission Scotland. We maintained paths by clearing the water bars and cross drains on the path from the Bennachie Centre to Mither Tap and also the Rowantree path. The path to Craigshannoch was eroding badly, so we built new water bars to improve the drainage. We laid a new path in Danny Gordon's Widdie, so now it is much better to walk on, the opening ribbon was cut by James Mackay one of the founders of the Bailies. We pruned the willow sculptures at the Back o' Bennachie to keep them in good shape. We planted trees around the new pond to improve this area for wildlife and we cleared scrub from the Colony site to help the field archaeology group with their research. We always have plenty to do but we never seem to have enough time so we juggle the tasks to fit in as much as we can.



We meet on the first Saturday of each month from March onwards. We are always pleased to welcome new volunteers.

## THE BENNACHIE CENTRE TRUST by John Nicol

The Bennachie Centre has more than 30,000 visits every year. The Bennachie Centre Trust is responsible for the internal maintenance and refreshing the exhibits. Aberdeenshire Council maintains the exterior of the building and provides the staff. The Forestry Commission for Scotland maintains the car park. John Nicol represents the Bailies on the Bennachie Centre Trust. The Bailies have contributed to improvements in the Centre.

Regular visitors will have noticed a number of changes to the Centre; many of these changes were suggested by visitors. The courtyard wall outside the Centre was reduced in height and many visitors now use it to sit on. The toilets are now open 7 days a week 52 weeks per year. Inside we've made a larger sitting area with tables and chairs and nearby there are display boards for the use of local schools and community groups. More changes are planned - why not pop in and see for yourself, a friendly welcome awaits.