

2010 9/180

Teacher and writer dies after life devoted to area

BY ALISTAIR BEATON

FORMER Inverurie Academy teacher Alexander (Algy) Watson MBE died at the weekend after a cancer battle. He was 84.

The Oyne writer was honoured by the Queen in 2001 in recognition of his conservation work in the rural area he loved.

Mr Watson was also widely known and popular through his long involvement in numerous community and sports groups and activities.

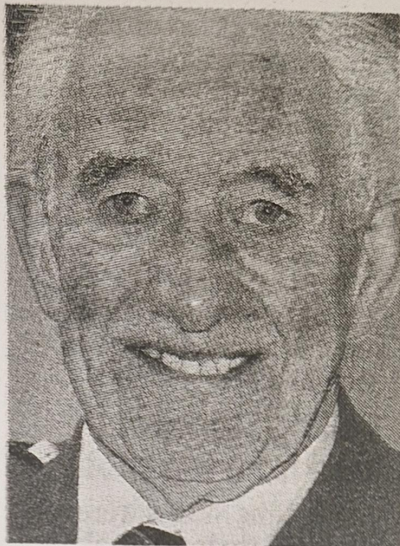
He was born at Bogend Farm at Oyne, and apart from teaching at Niddrie Marischal Secondary School in Edinburgh in the early 1950s and a recent spell in a nursing home in nearby In-sch, he lived his whole life in the village.

In 2000, the keen historian wrote an illustrated book, *Oyne - Past and Present*.

He was a founder member of the Bailies of Bennachie volunteer group in 1973, which cares for the landmark hill. He was a member of the Bailies' council until 2007 and served over the years as clerk, senior Bailie and chairman.

One of his proudest moments was in 1995 when the Duke of Rothesay opened the forest-clearing Bennachie Centre - which is a hub of activities for more than 100,000 visitors a year.

Mr Watson, a retired geography, English and history teacher, received treatment



Algy Watson: awarded MBE

for bowel cancer several years ago. After becoming ill towards the end of last year he had further chemotherapy but the cancer was found to have spread to his liver.

Mr Watson was educated at Oyne Primary and Inverurie Academy, where he was later to teach for over 40 years.

He graduated with an MA from Aberdeen University in 1949, and later taught at Inverurie from 1952-1989.

He then became the school's first Teacher Emeritus in recognition of his contribution to the academy.

Locally he had a long involvement in Oyne Community Association and West Garioch Community Council.

Last night Mr Watson's nephew Fred, of St Clair Wynd, Newburgh, said: "Algy played an active role in interests right across the community. He touched the lives of so many people."