



Newsletter

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Email address: friendsofcammo@yahoo.co.uk

Summer Barbeque 2016

The BBQ for this year was held on 14th August. The day dawned very cloudy and remained so for most of the day, although it was quite warm. The BBQ achieved its main purpose of bringing the community together for an afternoon of great music, great food



and lots of chat among friends and neighbours.

Music-wise, Callum Towns did a great warm-up job while people were arriving, and the barbeques were being fired up. There were occasional additional vocals from Arlene Chalmers and Annie Benge.



Callum was followed by the band, *Averaging 30*, who were excellent and got the place rocking. After this, there followed a very good singer, by the name of Alannah Moar, who accompanied herself on guitar. And finally we had *Groove Nation* who were totally fantastic, and there was much dancing and singing among the assembled crowd.



There was the usual fantastic choice of tempting home-baking, and with the tasty burgers and choice of side salad, washed down with a variety of soft drinks, there was no reason for anyone to go hungry. Together with the live music spanning almost four



hours, the whole afternoon was well worth the £5 entrance fee (children £3).

As usual, the BBQ would not be the great success it was, without the numerous helpers who turned out on the day to lend a physical hand in the erection of the various marquees, tents, tables and chairs, and who provided transport for the equipment such as barbeques, etc.



The BBQ committee are indebted to all who helped on the day, and especially those who provided such a wide variety of the most appetising tray-bakes. These people all helped to make the BBQ a success but, most of all, we are indebted to the meticulous planning over the past year by the Barbeque Committee.

Despite the cloudy day, the BBQ managed to attract about 300 people.



Photos by Annie Benge.

Text by Annie Benge & Harry Taylor

Cammo Canal Improvement

On the 14th April, the Postcode Lottery Trust advised us that our grant application had been successful and we had been awarded £9006.00. The bulk of this money is to pay for clearing the Canal of silt, which had built up over the past 40 years, and now rendered the Canal unsightly and lifeless. To this end, on 23rd July, the canal sluice was opened slightly and the water level was allowed to gradually drop. The remaining money will be used for further tree and hedgerow plantings. Scheduled Ancient Monument consent application has been made to Historic Environment Scotland for permission to clear poorly formed and



The drained canal showing collection of debris

encroaching trees within 5m. of canal edges. Consent is also required for silt removal and for it to be spread in Low Meadow.. A prerequisite to this work was to undertake an archaeological mapping exercise of the Canal to determine silt depth, substrata and make-up of the Canal bed. This survey was undertaken by Headland Archaeology, and their report was submitted together with the consent application.



The drained canal showing the banks of silt

The application was also sent to City of Edinburgh Planning Arboricultural Officers requesting an exemption from the Tree Preservation Order for the canal area. At the time of going to press, response to these consent applications has not yet been received, but is expected imminently!

LNR status for Cammo Estate?

The City of Edinburgh Council wishes to declare Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) to protect and enhance this historic diverse greenspace. A public consultation was undertaken during June to determine how favourable the suggestion was. Response sheets were available at the Drumbrae Hub, Cammo Lodge and locally on line.

In total 95 responses were received, 94 of which were in favour of declaring Cammo Estate an LNR, and 1 was not.

David Kyles, the Natural Heritage Service officer responsible for Cammo, has written a summary document which was sent to SNH and copied to the Friends. He has also prepared support papers in favour of granting LNR status, for presentation at the Transport & Environment Committee meeting on 1st November 2016.

Natural Heritage Service

David Kyles reports "There is due to be a re-allocation of sites between staff. I have now relocated to Inverleith. The likelihood is that I will still touch base at the Hermitage from time to time, utilise the Lodge at Cammo more often, and continue to manage Cammo Estate alongside a number of other Natural Heritage Parks in northern Edinburgh. I will share this workload with my colleague Velda Weir and we will both be line managed by Susan Dickson. Additional support will be given by Paul Vine, Senior Trees & Woodlands Officer, with regards to any significant capital spend or larger grant applications".

Old North-West Gateway Prior to 1817, the old Braehead to Leny public road ran through Cammo Estate from just north of Cammo Home Farm, along the north edge of Home Field, over the rise of West Field, and down into the SW corner of West Field, where it turned right and climbed up the face of the hill, and through the cut in the hillside to rejoin the existing road at the very dangerous corner..

The old North Drive in Cammo Estate arched round the back of Cammo House and ran parallel to this public road, separated from it by a raised bank and wall, until it reached the SW corner of West Field, where the NW Gate was located. This was a gateway wide enough to take a horse-drawn carriage, and led directly from the road into the estate, by-passing an ornamental yew grove located just inside.

Most of these features are now overgrown, but the raised bank can still be seen.



The south pillar of the NW Gate

Cammo Home Farm

On 31st of March 2016, Cammo Home Farm was finally sold to Mr. & Mrs. Shimwell for the sum of £678,500.00. New Heras fencing was erected around the property shortly afterwards. There have been no developments since, but demolition work is expected to commence soon. Mr. Shimwell is expected to build a single family home on the site when demolition is completed.

Cedrus Deodara in Pinetum

From this in 2006.....To this in 2016



This deodar cedar tree was planted in the Pinetum in 2006. The very graceful specimen was gifted by Douglas Seale, then Chairman of Friends of Cammo, and replaces a very large tree of the same species, lost to winter gales in 1995.

Spring Litter Pick

Ten volunteers turned out on the 10th April to help tidy up Cammo for the Summer. This was a record number of volunteers, and we greatly appreciate it. 8 bags of litter were collected, mostly from over-night campers in the woods, who leave everything behind them, including sleeping bags, tents and large numbers of bottles and cans.

Access point into North Field

That part of Cammo Road, stretching from the east entrance into Cammo Estate to the North Gate of Cammo, was recently re-surfaced by the Council.

In conjunction with this work, the Council erected a new stob and wire fence to replace the missing fence from Cammo Home Farm to the start of the hedgerow just past the bend in the road.

A gap was left between the end of the fenceline and the start of the hedgerow. This gap will have a self-closing gate fitted to it sometime in November, when the new entrance will be formalised.

Vision for Cammo

After several months, and many re-drafts later, the Vision for Cammo has finally been completed by your Committee. It was then sent to members, the Natural Heritage Service, Cammo Estate Advisory Committee, other local groups and it was posted on Facebook. The reaction has generally been favourable, and it is hoped that the Vision will assist a Heritage Lottery Fund bid by the Council.

Overgrown Stable Block

The Newsletter usually concerns itself with facts which have occurred during the past six months but, on this occasion, we wish to draw attention to an on-going situation which, if not checked soon, will result in unsightly and expensive repair work to the masonry of one of the finest built-features in Cammo Estate - namely, the Stables building.

For many years now, self-seeded young saplings and vegetation have been allowed to grow uncontrolled both within this roofless building, in the immediate outside vicinity, and along the top of the wall structures. This vegetation has now grown to such a size and strength that there is a danger that it will cause serious damage to the stonework of the walls and flooring, causing further potential ruination of this fine building.



The overgrown Stables tower block

Key Safe at Cammo Lodge

With Harry Taylor no longer being a key-holder after his retirement in March next year, the Committee has decided to install a key-safe at Cammo Lodge. This will be fitted at the end of September, and all Sunday lodge volunteers will be issued with the operating code. A new set of operational instructions for these volunteers will be written, as key collection will not then be necessary.

Dates for your Diary

Litter Pick: Help tidy up Cammo for Winter (equipment supplied)
Ordinary General Meeting: Come along - put forward your views
Annual General Meeting: (2017) Reports of activities & comments
Litter Piick: Help tidy up Cammo for Summer (equipment supplied)

<u>Meet at:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Time:</u>
Cammo Lodge	Nov. 06th	1000/1200
Cammo Lodge	Dec. 07th	1930/2100
Cammo Lodge	Mar. 01st	1930/2100
Cammo Lodge	Apr. 09th	1000/1200

N.B. It is difficult to predict when work-days will be required to deal with the various projects. However, such work-days will be promulgated by email, giving as much notice as possible...

Obituary On 25th March this year, we heard the sad news that Pauline Wykes had died after a long illness. For 12 years Pauline acted as the co-ordinator responsible for drawing up the Visitor Centre staffing rota, and often she would stand in herself when a volunteer was unable to keep the previously agreed appointment. The job of volunteer co-ordinator is not an easy one, and we appreciated very much the extra hours that Pauline put in. She will be sadly missed.

Stepping down This will be the penultimate issue of the Newsletter edited and produced by Harry Taylor, who will step down from the Committee at the Annual General meeting in March 2017. Due to family commitments, Harry has lately found it impossible to attend Group and Committee meetings, and after 19 years service with the Committee in various capacities, he has decided that it is now time to hand over the Newsletter Editorship to a younger person.



Beauty of Moray The photo above, shows this variety of apple tree taken during the month of July. This tree was among the many different varieties, which were planted in the Walled Garden in August 2015, and already the tree was laden with many developing apples, to such an extent that they had to be picked early, to prevent the branches from breaking under their weight.

The bees have landed

The long-awaited bee hive was installed in the newly constructed bee enclosure near the North Gate on the 21st June this year.



The hive is located behind two wire fences, the top strand of each fence being of barbed wire. Each fence has its own wooden gate, both of which are securely padlocked.

Therefore, there is little danger of the bees being disturbed, and they have been seen busily engaged going back and forth collecting nectar and pollen. Perhaps there may be a few jars of Cammo Honey produced later this year! The hive will be maintained and serviced by David and Bron Wright, who are both registered beekeepers.

Vandalism at Cammo On Saturday 4th June this year, the three stone sculptures on the Pinetum wall were wrenched from their anchorage points by vandals, who then trundled them some distance to the clearing under the Copper Beech tree, where they were used to limit the extent of a fire which the vandals had lit, using the wooden bench from the front of Cammo House ruin as fuel. The sculptures were found the next day damaged and blackened, lying in the ashes of the fire, but due to their weight, they had to lie there until transport could be arranged at the beginning of the following week. They were taken to the Hermitage of Braid, where they were jet-washed and are now awaiting re-attachment. A stonemason has been approached. The bench on the grassy area in front of Cammo House was very popular and will eventually need to be replaced. The matter was reported to Police Scotland, but by the time the devastation was discovered, the vandals had long since gone. The sad fact is that these sculptures were only replaced on the wall on 17th February this year, after their mountings were found to be unsafe.



Stone sculptures mounted on Pinetum wall