



# Newsletter

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## B in the Park - The 2017 Barbeque

### Summer Barbeque 2017

Sandwiched between two rainy days, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August, dawned bright and sunny. (What a relief!) - a perfect day for the fifth Friends of Cammo barbeque!



Named "B in the Park" (ha ha!) – a nod to the Cammo **B**ees, the **B**ands and the **B**arbeque, it was advertised more widely with a super poster created for us by Clark Whitehead, a leaflet drop and advertisements in the Cramond Association and Friends of the River

Almond newsletters. Almost 400 people turned up on the day and it was arguably our most successful barbeque yet!

As per last year, Callum Towns, with Kenny Donald on bass guitar, and occasional additional vocals from Liz and Annie (ensemble now called the Morris Minors by the way!) did a great warm-up while people were arriving and the barbeques were being fired up.

Then the bands got going and all four gave absolutely cracking performances. First up we heard Altinak, a four-piece indie band who have all just finished school at Linlithgow and are about to start at Glasgow and Edinburgh uni's. These talented young people write their own songs (although they did two covers on the day) and they played at the Party at the Palace festival at Linlithgow the day before. Next up was Alannah Moar, a local musician

who writes her own material and played at the BBC during the festival. Bad Monkey, a local band who have been together nine years, were exhilarating and lastly, a new addition to our event – Big Tuna who wowed the crowd with their covers of rock classics and had some of us up on our feet dancing. (You know who you were!!!)



Once the burgers got going, the bbq chefs did a great job keeping up with the queue – (big rush from 12:30 to 1:00 pm) - and served up absolutely fantastic burgers in lovely buns. Hot dogs were also on offer this year, and went down very well especially with the children. Next stop



lettuce, onions, tomatoes and gherkins with ketchup, mayo and mustard, along with a soft drink.

Burgers and hot dogs were followed by the usual fantastic choice of delicious home-baking. The children in particular loved the tray-bakes and kept coming back for more until there wasn't a crumb left!

A fabulous addition to the day was the Children's Games and Sports run

by Judy Arrowsmith and her daughters, Katie and Sue. 120 children attended the event, and many of them had a great day running races, blowing bubbles and trying to beat the goalie, Rory Campbell, goalkeeper of Cramond FC.08 Pele league, which was very popular with the bigger boys. We very much hope this will become a regular part of the annual event.

Once again we were very happy to have Bron and Dave, "the bee people" to speak to people about honey bees, especially now that Cammo Park has its own hive, and they reported that they spoke to many people all of whom were interested to know about bee-keeping.

With the sunshine, the great music, the games and the excellent food, out came the picnic blankets and out came the wine and Prosecco!

Friends and neighbours spent a lovely afternoon in the park chatting, relaxing and listening to music. A tiny shower at about 3:30 pm saw some people decide to call it a day, but that blew over almost as soon as it started and the majority who remained were treated to more great music in the sunshine until about 4:30, when they called for an encore!

The BBQ Committee is once again extremely grateful to all who turned out to help on the day putting up the tents, providing transport for equipment, setting out the chairs and tables, cooking, serving, selling tickets etc. and for all the hard work involved in setting up the event on the day and beforehand; also to the bands who played free of charge, and to all those who provided such a fabulous array of tray-bakes.

But we are especially grateful to all the people who came to support the event and who, by all accounts, had a really nice afternoon in Cammo Park.





# Out and About in the Park

*By our Roving Reporter, Harry Taylor*

## REMOVAL OF TREE LIMB

In early May the Forestry department of the City Council removed a fairly heavy tree limb from the large beech tree located in the old beech roundel near the North gate. This limb was over-hanging the path between the North gate and Cammo House and was a source of potential danger as other limbs on this tree had previously collapsed.

## DEAD WOOD

Dead wood accumulates in Cammo, either due to felling, as in the case above, the result of wind damage or simply just because twigs and branches occasionally fall. Piles of dead wood are excellent habitat for many creatures such as mice, voles and lots of invertebrates and it is best left to lie where it is. In addition, the larger logs provide a great substrate for fungi to grow on.



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## NEW GATE AT NORTH FIELD



In the week beginning 1st May 2017, the Forest and Natural Heritage Service of the City Council completed the installation of a new gateway at the North East corner of North Field. The new gate is set back from the edge of Cammo Road by about 3 metres, which is safer than the previous open-ended pathway which led directly out onto Cammo Road. The new gateway (see photo) consists of an open-either-way, self-closing wooden gate set on stout wooden gateposts, within a wooden lead-in enclosure, and is designed to link up with the River Almond Walkway which runs between the houses on the opposite side of Cammo Road.

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## FRIENDS CLEAR UP AFTER OTHERS

On Friday 28th April at about 4:30 pm a group of about 25 young people were observed in the old badger sett between Low Meadow and West Field. They had a small fire going and it was obviously some sort of party or gathering. A woman dog-walker called the Fire Brigade because she was afraid the fire might spread in the very dry weather we have been experiencing and about an hour later two firemen were seen walking up the main drive carrying fire beaters and there was a fire engine was standing by at the Main gates.

It is not known what action was taken by the Firemen but when the young people left the park, as usual, they left lots of litter behind including plastic food packaging, plastic four-can ring holders, paper, about a dozen bottles, some of them broken, and cans that were lying scorched in the remains of the fire.

These items can be very dangerous for wild animals and were quickly cleared up by Friends of Cammo.

Once again two of the wall sculptures - the pineapple and the vase - were wrenched off the wall and thrown into the canal. Nick climbed in and lifted them out and they are to be reinstated.

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*Work has started on the building where the old farm house used to be.*

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*This photo shows how Ash Dieback can badly affect some trees and hardly affect others growing a few*

## **Environmental Report**

For the past few years we have put in lots of yellow rattle seed and David Kyles, the Ranger, has arranged for the fields to be cut once a year with the cuttings left on. The fields were almost entirely big coarse grass three feet high in the summer but the rattle knocks this back massively and the cutting creates gaps which allows other flowering plants to colonise plus the machine spreads the seed around. The three big Cammo fields have gone from being completely dominated by tall tussock grasses to beautiful, short, florally diverse grasslands in a few years. All it takes is the initial sowing of the rattle and one cut a year in the autumn. No other management is required; it is cheap and easy. The result is that there have been great carpets of buttercups and rattle plus hundreds of orchids this year. The council is now considering using the same approach for some of their other sites.

Rain during the early part of the summer also contributed to the masses of orchids, and the hogweed (not the infamous Japanese hogweed, but the native one) together with all the wildflower, attracted huge numbers of bumble bees and honey bees and other insects. This in turn meant that we had dozens of all four species of Hirundinids - swallows, sand martins, house martins and swifts. Incidentally, the swallows have always turned up in Cammo Park on April 19th! Really, every year for the past 10 years or more!

It has also been a tremendous year for ladybirds and there have been more grasshoppers chirruping away than I have ever heard before.

For the first time in recent years, Cammo was home to a clutch of sparrow hawk chicks, but unfortunately they were killed before they had left the nest. There were four but the feathers were found scattered under the nest. The culprit was probably a crow, buzzard or tawny owl. Two obvious tawny owl chicks were spotted, as well as one fledged buzzard and there appears to be a female roe deer resident in the park.

**Nick Bengel**



## **PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN**

### **THE CANAL**



Photos by Harry Taylor, taken in July, of the canal since it was dredged and desilted earlier in the year. Wildflower has been sown along the right-hand bank, which should start to flower next year.

Lots of underwater growth going on – two Potamogetons, flote grass, starwort and hornwort all starting to grow. The water soldier, bog bean, iris and bulrush all getting going too. Still a few very big toad tadpoles swimming about but most are out and all the frog tadpoles gone.

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### **PLANTING**

150 gorse bushes were planted in May, in High Meadow and in South Park. Gorse provides very good cover for rabbits but are also a very good early source of nectar for bees.

Comfrey was planted in the silt dug out from the canal. Again, comfrey is one of the favourite food plants for the many species of bumble bee we have in Cammo.

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### **BIRD BOXES**

We were very pleased to receive a grant from Baillie Gifford for £1,000. This will enable us to put up starling and jackdaw boxes and buy more yellow rattle seed.

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### **THE CAMMO BEES**



The Cammo Bees are back! Our first colony, situated in the Walled Garden, had to be taken away because they turned out to be extremely aggressive! Alas, our second Bee Colony died off due to the cold weather in the early part of the year. But in August, bee-keepers, David and Bron Wright, installed a third colony and, so far, they seem to be doing OK. Third time lucky! Fingers



## CAMMO ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

On 7th and 8th July the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS) organised a "dig" at the rear of the old house. Two trenches were opened, one of which revealed the base of a wall of a rear extension. Various artefacts were found including a 10cm ornamental crocodile, a shoe buckle, belt buckle and lead shot.



Guided walks were taken around the estate and geophysical and metal detection surveys done. Both days were very successful and more are planned. Thanks to Ian Rodger of the Cramond Heritage Trust and Simon Gillam of the Friends of Cammo for taking people on the guided walks

**Esther Davidson (FoC)**



## LOVE PARKS WEEK

This council initiative was held from 14th to 23rd July Event. On 16th Nick Benge led a walk and talk round Cammo Park looking at the flora and fauna and environmental projects past, present and future.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Meet at Cammo Lodge

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Litter pick:</b> Help tidy up Cammo for winter (Equipment supplied)	Sunday	Nov 12 10:00-12:00
<b>Ordinary General Meeting:</b> Come along and put forward your views	Wednesday	Dec 6 19:30-21:00
<b>Annual General Meeting (2018):</b> Reports of Activities & Comments	Wednesday	Mar 7 19:30-21:00
<b>Litter pick:</b> Help tidy up Cammo for Summer (equipment supplied)	Sunday	Apr 8 10:00-12:00

**N.B.** Volunteer days to assist with the various projects, such as tree planting, putting up bird boxes etc. are hard to predict but as much notice as possible will be given via email, our Facebook page and posters in the park.

## New Motto!

