

# The Cramond Association

*Promoting the amenity of the community of Cramond, Barnton and Cammo and safeguarding its heritage*



## The Cramond Association Annual Report 2020-21

### Introduction

This has been a very different and challenging year! We have had to do things differently and find ways to support our community. It is worth recalling that the Cramond Association is a thriving community association, with about 600 subscribing households. It is dedicated to the preservation, sound development and improvement of Cramond, Barnton and Cammo and to safeguarding their heritage.

Cramond is a very attractive village on the outskirts of Edinburgh, located at the mouth of the River Almond, where it meets the Firth of Forth. The Association encourages residents in Cramond, Barnton and Cammo (the surrounding communities) to take an active interest in the local area so that they have more knowledge, pride and understanding about their very attractive environment. The Association also works to enable visitors to enjoy and appreciate the area's social, industrial and natural heritage.



An empty pandemic Cramond.

Its activities normally include a range of activities, and we have managed to change these to meet the requirements of the times:

- Regular meetings with presentations on topics such as local interests, social topics and natural history. These have moved to Zoom with recordings made available to members.

- An active History Section with its own programme of talks. Again, these have been held on Zoom and recorded.
- We were unable to hold our AGM in March at the usual time, but did manage to hold it in a reduced format on Zoom in September.
- All Committee meetings had to be held on Zoom.
- The events programme has had to be done differently. We were not able to hold our annual Carols by Candlelight for example. Our conservation projects, eg woodlands restoration, and commenting on airport and planning activities have been continuing on Zoom or in a limited active way.
- Activities have also included planning for the Walled Garden through the Friends Group and working with the Friends of Cramond Campus to deliver the promised sports facilities or proper green open space on the site of the Dunfermline College of Physical Education.
- Working closely with other local organisations such as Friends of the River Almond Walkway (FRAW), Cramond and Barnton Community Council (CBCC) and Cramond Heritage Trust (CHT) in the Cramond Collaborative.
- As a registered charity we are able to benefit from the advantages of that status and from the additional revenue brought in by Gift Aid.
- 2020 was our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we hoped to mark that properly, but that was not possible! However, we have been able to stay active and support the community including through charitable donations.



Cramond Kirk Tower, with sundial.

### **The historic village of Cramond**

During 2020-21 we still worked with other organisations to maintain and enhance the special nature of Cramond by:

- Continuing to improve the woodland areas and paths around the Kirk as far as we were able.
- Planning to develop new community facilities for the future.

- Opposing inappropriate planning developments as they arose including around the River Almond.
- Working with others to support management of aircraft noise as part of the Noise Advisory Board and Airport Consultative Committee.
- Supporting the Cramond and Barnton Community Council (CBCC) in improving the quality of life for residents in the village, eg around traffic management and planning applications.



The river from the Grotto Bridge – different flows at different times

### **Access and enjoyment by all**

The Association promotes access and enjoyment of Cramond by all, including members of the public, local residents, walkers, cyclists, families, community groups and picnickers as well as day visitors and tourists, sightseers and foreign visitors. We did this in 2020-2021 through Zoom meetings, our notice boards, electronic postings on Facebook and our website, and in our monthly newsletter by:

- Working with others on the ReDrawing Edinburgh Programme – aimed at commemorating the expansion of the city in 1920 to include Cramond and Barnton amongst others. This has all had to be virtual but has successfully made many more aware of our history.
- Working with the Friends of the River Almond Walkway (FRAW) to debate the proposed changes to Dowie’s Mill Weir and working with them to support the planned replacement of the Salvesen Steps with a path.



Dowie's Weir in full flood.

- Promoting activities of the Friends of Cammo.
- Promoting links with other groups as far as possible to help develop activities and plan for the future.
- Supporting the improvement of the Cramond Walled Garden, through support of the Friends organisation.

### **Orientation and interpretation**

The Association, together with other local organisations in the Interpretation Group, has organised a number of ways for people to learn about the area by:

- Supporting the ReDrawing Edinburgh Project.
- Examining novel ways of publicising Cramond through information technology and other options.
- Attracting funding for our activities such as the Walled Garden and Woodlands.
- Working in partnership with other organisations such as the Edinburgh Shoreline Project and EcoLarder through promotion of beach cleans and other environmental activities – largely in abeyance in 2020.

### **Education**

The CA managed to continue its active engagement in 2020-21 in promoting education and learning about the area and the wider world through:

- Continuing to run its successful programme of monthly talks on-line through Zoom. The talks were all recorded and made available to members on the dedicated Members' Area of our Website.
- Promoting the History Section which has about 50 members and often many more people attending its monthly talks also on Zoom.

## Maintaining and improving the quality of the environment

The CA continued in 2020 to:

- Work hard to improve the paths in the Kirk Woodlands as far as possible. Labelling trees with details of the species – thanks to Stefan Slater.
- Place increased emphasis on the Cramond Walled Garden and obtaining funding and support for improving it.
- Work to reduce the noise level of aircraft overflying Cramond through active participation in the Noise Advisory Board.
- Participation in the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee.



An empty airport in the pandemic

- Check all planning applications to the Council, focusing on the ones relevant to us, as well as liaising with the CBCC about proposed developments.
- Oppose inappropriate developments in the Cramond Conservation Area.
- Actively supporting the development of the Friends of Cramond Campus, which is campaigning to ensure that the former playing fields of the Campus are developed to serve the community either as green space or sports facilities, instead of being used for further housing.

## Community Engagement

Through the CA's activities, local people should have more knowledge, pride and understanding of the area's social, industrial and natural heritage and can participate in activities to maintain and enhance the special nature of the area. Involving the community in 2020-21 was done through:

- The coordination of activities with other local organisations through the Cramond Collaborative.
- Working to broaden the range of activities to encourage all-age involvement as far as we could.
- Representation on significant local organisations, such as the Cammo Management Committee.
- Supporting links with other organisations such as Friends of the River Almond Walkway and Cramond Heritage Trust.
- The Association's e-newsletter (monthly, circulation of 550 households) and regular articles in Cramond Kirk's *Grapevine* (quarterly; 3,500 households).
- The CA's website which has been revamped to provide better access to information, the two CA notice boards and the CA Facebook page.
- Giving financial support to local organisations and events, as agreed by the CA Committee.

- Publicising to our members the work of the various groups engaged in working in our community.



Association wreath laid at the Davidsons Mains War Memorial in November 2020.

### **Built Features**

While the CA does not have direct responsibilities for any built features, it continued in 2020-21 to:

- Support FRAW in its work on maintaining and improving the River Almond Walkway and the replacement of the Salvesen Steps.
- Monitor the River and Fisheries Trust of Scotland (RAFTS) RiverLife Project to ensure the visual attractions of the mill buildings, ruins and weirs at Dowie's Mill, Cramond Brig, and Fair-a-Far are maintained and lobbying with others for a proper enhancement to the weirs.
- Support the CHT in its work in the Maltings Exhibition Centre.



### **Long term plans**

We aim to continue the activities described for 2020-21.

We aim to continue to seek ways to broaden our range of activities to support the community in Cramond. These will include seeking broader involvement from all ages etc.

In 2020-21 the Association continued to work with representatives of local organisations to implement the City Plan for Cramond which sets out how the area can be improved in new and inspiring ways and this will continue.

The Association plans to continue working to maintain and improve the special quality of our environment in 2021-22 through supporting the Community Council on planning, and through supporting proper and active discussion of new Flight Change Proposals for the airport.

We intend to look at how we approach future opportunities and challenges as a result of the pandemic and to use electronic media creatively for the benefit on all, but without neglecting other traditional methods of meeting and working together.

### **Acknowledgements and thanks**

We need to thank Cramond Kirk and David Haggarty, the hall manager for his and his team's support for our activities. That support is much appreciated.

We must also thank Anthony Seaton and Angela Smith who are retiring. Anthony has acted as Vice-President for several years and has been a stalwart support to both the Committee and the Association, including both suggesting lecturers and lecturing himself.

We also need to thank Lesley Cumming for her editing of our Newsletter.

We must thank Margaret Wilson of Links Design for the management and support of our website. Her support has been invaluable in helping us to maintain our activities on-line. Her willingness to advise and respond quickly to the changing needs has been magnificent.

I wish to thank the committee members past and present for their support and activity during this strange and difficult time. They have adapted to the new reality well and positively.

Prof Adam Cumming

President, The Cramond Association

**The Cramond Association Committee**

27 February 2021