



Site #31

Cambusbarron

The Original 2017
Full-Length Chapter

OutlandishScotland.com

A Novel Holiday Travel Guidebook

Cambusbarron: Site #31



Once a Contender for the Fraser's Ridge *Outlander* Season FOUR Film Site

We wrote this chapter (and published its entirety in the 2017 edition of the *Outlandish Scotland Journey Part Four eBook*) back when Cambusbarron's Gillies Hill was a strong contender for **Fraser's Ridge**—a long-term film site that would feature in *Outlander's* Season Four: *Drums of Autumn*.

In January of 2018 we learned that the plan to film in Cambusbarron had officially been abandoned.

"The *Outlander* production team earlier sought permission to build [the Fraser's Ridge] set in woods outside Cambusbarron, near Stirling.

"However, this plan is no longer going ahead."

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/outlander-cast-and-crew-return-to-fife-village-1-4669949>

It is unclear whether the *Outlander* production team withdrew their request, or whether the Cambusbarron Community Council denied them permission to film in the area. Basically, it doesn't matter. **Cambusbarron is NOT an *Outlander* Season Four film site.**

To avoid renumbering all subsequent chapters, we replaced the original, full-length Cambusbarron chapter with a starkly abbreviated version in *Outlandish Scotland Journey Part Four*.

Having spent weeks researching and writing it, however, we hated the idea of simply discarding it. So, we didn't!

Beginning on the next page, you'll find this chapter's original, 2017 manuscript.

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Outlander Season FOUR Film Site—Maybe!



[Internet-posted pic, ©unknown segment (enhanced)]

This chapter is published as a “work in progress” because nothing has been filmed here—as of this writing.

In April of 2017, a proposal was presented to Stirling Council planners by *Outlander* Supervising Location Manager, Hugh Gourlay, requesting permission to use Murrayshall Quarry (photo above) and Murray’s Wood in Cambusbarron as film sites for the series.

http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/plans-film-new-series-fantasy-10178196#ICID=sharebar_twitter

Several *Outlander* news websites were quick to investigate and speculate as to what filming might occur in Cambusbarron’s woodland area.

“Cambusbarron is a village in Stirling, Scotland. It is situated 2 miles west of the city of Stirling, and 10 miles south of Doune Castle. The areas being considered are Murray’s Wood and Murrayshall Quarry. Both to the south of the village, the locations are a picturesque wooded area and an unused quarry respectively.

“Proposals for the area are quite comprehensive. As well as access for vehicles, the proposal asks for temporary film set buildings, a construction compound, material storage and a filming service area. All this suggests a significant investment in the location. And it is believed [that the filming will] last at least a year.

“Our guess is that this will be the location for Fraser’s Ridge. In line with ‘Drums of Autumn,’ the fourth book in the series, Fraser’s Ridge will be introduced in Season 4 of *Outlander*. Those who have read the books will appreciate the iconic nature of this location.”

<http://www.outlanderlocations.com/news/cambusbarron-site-of-frasers-ridge/>



Cambusbarron (Murray’s Wood and Murrayshall Quarry) receives a **Might-Be-Fun** rating because:

- Though early indications suggest that the local council and the Cambusbarron community welcome the prospect of *Outlander* establishing a long-term film site in the quarry, nothing has been confirmed.
- Without Season 4 behind-the-scenes info and screenshots, we can only speculate as to where filming will occur.
- Reaching Murrayshall Quarry requires a 20 to 30 minute, one-way, trail hike.
- Visiting Murray’s Wood may be problematic. (We’ll explain this later.)
- Why not a **Skip It** rating?

If you’ve ever hoped to visit an *Outlander* film site *while* the show is filming, Murrayshall Quarry is likely to be a great candidate for doing that in 2018—and beyond! Fraser’s Ridge prominently features in several of Diana Gabaldon’s *Outlander* novels.



[©2012 Peigimccann segment (enhanced)]

Gillies Hill is a tall craig with a tapered tail that covers 350 acres. It lies southwest of Cambusbarron and northwest of Bannockburn Battlefield. When visiting the Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre, Gillies Hill can be seen beyond Robert the Bruce’s memorial statue—as demonstrated in the photo above.

<http://www.nts.org.uk/Visit/Bannockburn>

“Gillies Hill is part of the [National Trust for Scotland] Battle of Bannockburn battlefield. Why? Because it was here [in 1314] that Bruce stationed his Ghillies, or cooks, grooms, smiths, etc,

before the Battle—the ‘Sma’ Folk’ that the poet Barbour called them in his 14th century poem. The name ‘Gillies’ comes from that Gaelic word ghillies. ...”

[According to legend, Bruce’s ghillies remained camped on Gillies Hill during the first day of the battle. On the second day, however, they descended from the hill in droves to join in.]

“The English, alarmed by the number and the noise from them (perhaps banging pots and pans and waving rags like flags) thought them Scots reinforcements, and ... fled the field.”

<http://savegillieshill.org.uk/>



[©2017 savegillieshill.org.uk]

One of the reasons that Cambusbarron locals may be eager to accept *Outlander*'s proposal for filming in Murrayshall Quarry: having a film crew occupying the quarry will likely assist their ongoing efforts to prevent its reactivation.

“We are trying to save the beautiful, popular and historic Gillies Hill in Cambusbarron, Stirlingshire, Scotland from being destroyed by the reactivation of quarrying.

“*Save Gillies Hill* has helped preserve the Hill since 2007 when reactivation of quarrying was [first] threatened. But that threat is now extreme, with two new quarriers in the frame.”

<http://savegillieshill.org.uk/>



[©2010 Peigimccann]

“Gillies Hill currently lies under threat from potential renewed quarrying operations. Save Gillies Hill, a non-profit organization, has responded to these threats with its annual **March of the Gillies**, which takes place on the Sunday closest to the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn [June 23rd and 24th, 1314] and follows the path of the Gillies from the hill to the Borestone; as well as its annual fundraising event, the **Big Widstock**, which takes place in King George IV Park in Cambusbarron in July.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gillies_Hill



[Underlying map ©2017 Microsoft® Bing™]

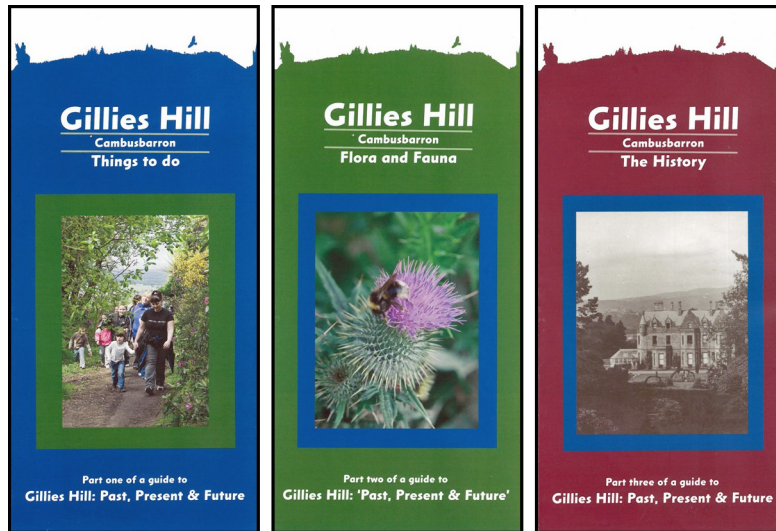
A Trail Map is Required to Negotiate Gillies Hill or Murray’s Wood

“The majority of Gillies Hill has been classified as a Semi-natural Ancient Woodland by the Woodland Trust ...

“The grounds of Gillies Hill have been used by walkers, joggers, birdwatchers, and botanists for decades. Geocachers from all over the world come to find no fewer than 40 geocaches hidden on the hill and in its immediate vicinity.

“Paths on the hill range from relatively easy rambles to more strenuous hikes. [Occasionally] paths can get slippery and muddy so it’s best to come prepared with stout boots and a walking stick. Among the most popular walks are the Quarry Walk, the Lake Walk, the Tree Tour and the Public Trail that leads west through Murray’s Wood to the Bannock Burn.”

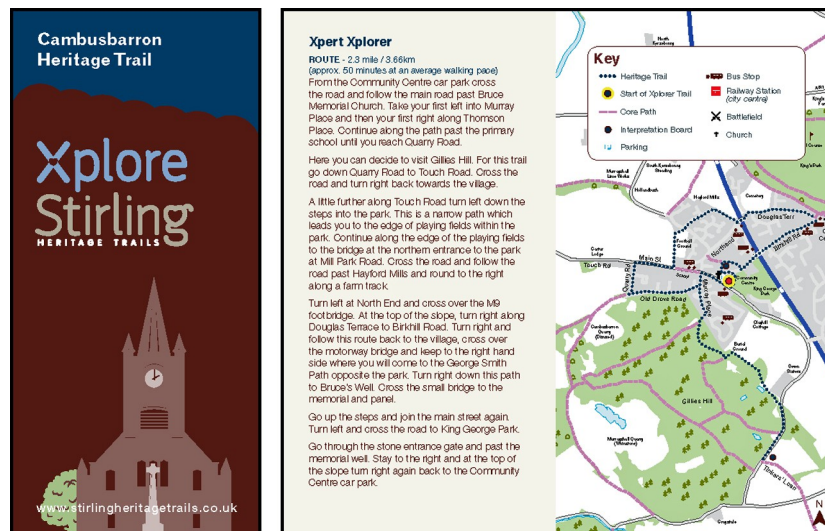
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gillies_Hill



[©2010 Cambusbarron Community Council]

There are three Gillies Hill leaflets produced by the Cambusbarron Community Council, each with a different interest focus, each with a small trail map. They are available at the Cambusbarron Library (which is also the Community Centre), but not available online. With the council’s permission, we created a PDF containing all three of the leaflets and posted it, free of charge, on our website.

<http://OutlandishScotland.com/31Cambusbarron3Leaflets.pdf>



[©2014 Stirling Heritage Walks segments (enhanced)]

Our favorite Gillies Hill trail map is in a leaflet that once was provided on the Stirling Heritage Trails website (portions seen above). Unfortunately, that website has been replaced by another one, and each of the two map links found there provide only page 1 of the original 2-page leaflet—though it is the page that contains the map.

<https://stirlingheritagewalks.wordpress.com/cambusbarron/>

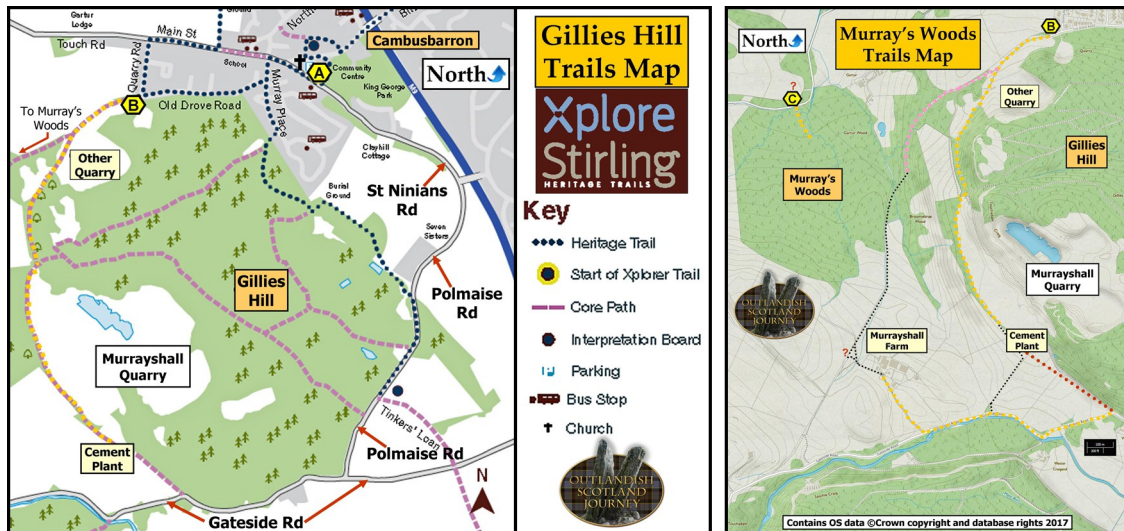
Because of this, we have posted the original, 2-page, 2014 Cambusbarron Heritage Trail leaflet on our website.

<http://OutlandishScotland.com/31SHTcambusbarronLeaflet.pdf>

We used a section of the Stirling Heritage Trails map to create an *Outlander* Gillies Hill trail map.

After doing that, we realized that some Outlanderites may want to hike into Murray’s Wood. We used an Ordnance Survey topographic map to create an *Outlander* Murray’s Wood trail map. (If you’re an experienced hiker and prefer using a topographic map, visit the link below – Gillies Hill is available there, as well.)

<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getoutside/local/murrays-wood-stirling>



[Underlying maps ©2014 Stirling.gov.uk and OS data ©2017 Crown copyright]

Full-sized copies of the two maps seen above – along with our Area Overview Map – are available in a Cambusbarron Maps PDF, posted free of charge on our website.

<http://OutlandishScotland.com/31CambusbarronMaps.pdf>

Outlandish Scotland Journey Cambusbarron Maps Keys

All Three Maps

- A: Cambusbarron Community Centre car park and main village bus stop
- B: Old Drove Road small car park and Quarry Trail trailhead
- C: Trailhead of a short walk into Murray’s Wood (Unknown parking availability)

Coordinates for points A, B, and C are provided below, in the Driving Directions.

Gillies Hill Trails Map

- Pink Dashes:** Established trails
- Orange Dashes:** The most direct route to Murray's Hill Quarry

Murray’s Wood Trails Map

- Pink Dashes:** Established trail to Murray’s Wood
- Orange Dashes:** Additional trails we know exist

Black Dots: Trails of unknown quality

(They may be little more than rugged footpaths and may be overgrown)

Red Dots: The driveway leading to Murrayshall Quarry

(It may be closed during filming)

Gillies Hill Quarry Trail Directions

Please Note: The warnings below are from the Cambusbarron Community Council leaflets.

“There may be restricted access within the boundary of Murrayshall Quarry. Users should check signs, respect fences, and request guidance from the quarry operator if in doubt.

“Some of these walks go very close to the edge of steep cliffs. PLEASE TAKE CARE. Strong boots are recommended for all of the routes as the paths can be muddy and slippery in places.”

From the Cambusbarron Community Centre and Library car park and bus stop (map point **A**):

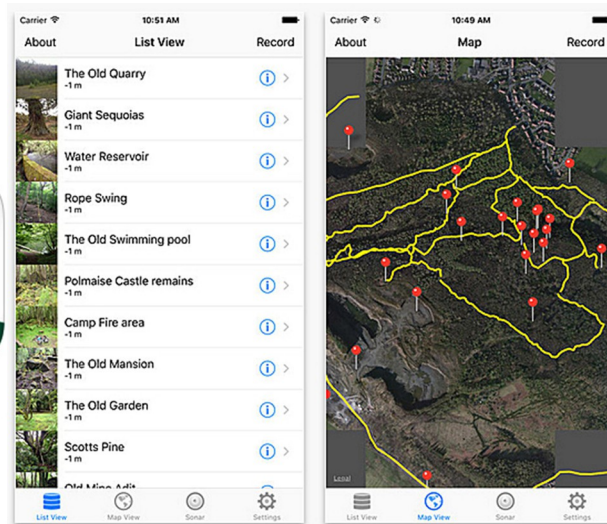
- Standing with your back to the centre, turn right to walk northwest on Main Street.
- Continue past the church (on your right) to the first left turn, Murray Place.
- Turn left and walk south on Murray Place to the first right turn, Thomson Place.
- Turn right and follow Thomson Place west, past the primary school, where it becomes Old Drove Road.
- Follow Old Drove Road, keeping left, to the small car park at the Quarry Trail trailhead.

From the Old Drove Road car park (map point **B**):

- Follow the Quarry Trail southwest.
- At the first fork in the trail (which should be sign-posted), keep left.
- At the T-intersection, turn right to descend to Murrayshall Quarry.
- When finished, head back the way you came.

If you prefer a different (probably faster) route back to the Community Centre car park and bus stop:

- Continue southeast on the Murrayshall Quarry driveway to Gateside Road.
(If the driveway is blocked by filming security, you can cut across the fields south of the trail, following the low stone wall downhill, until you reach Gateside Road.)
- Turn left and follow Gateside Road east until you reach Polmaise Road.
- Turn left and follow Polmaise Road north, continuing as it curves east and then north again.
- When Polmaise Road turns sharply right and crosses over the M9, continue straight ahead (northwest) and you'll be on St. Ninians Road.
- Follow St. Ninians Road until you see the Community Centre on your right.



[©2016 Save Gillies Hill app screenshots (enhanced)]

If you have an iPhone or iPad, Save Gillies Hill offers a free app to guide you through all the trails on Gillies Hill and provide background information about the sites you'll encounter if you walk the other trails.

<http://savegillieshill.org.uk/>

Murray's Wood Trails Directions

Visiting Murray's Wood is problematic because the wood doesn't have well-established hiking trails, as Gillies Hill does.

We suggest driving to map point **C** and discovering whether there is space to park **without blocking the road or a layby**. If legitimate parking space is available, enjoy the short path that leads into Murray's Wood. At its end, turn around and return to your car.

Do not go wandering through the woods! Cell phone reception may be dodgy. Even if you are able to call for help, rescue may not be able to find you.

To walk to Murray's Wood from the Old Drove Road car park:

- Keep right at the first fork in Quarry Trail (which should be sign-posted), and follow the Murray's Wood trail southwest.
- At the end of the established trail—where it becomes smaller and less well-maintained—turn around and walk back to the Quarry Trail.

If you're an experienced hiker—**equipped with a compass and backwoods hiking supplies**—and wish to continue through the eastern edge of Murray's Wood, you'll have to rely on the topographic map to make it to Murrayshall Farm.

We've placed black dots along the route to assist you, but aren't sure what you'll find when you reach the area northwest of Murrayshall Farm. (Hence, the question mark.) You may have to hunt around a bit to make your way over a little river to the path that leads into the farm. (If you can't find a way to the farm, continue south—you'll eventually reach Gateside Road.)

- Once at Murrayshall Farm, walk southeast down the farm's driveway to Gateside Road.

- Turn left and follow Gateside Road east and north until you reach the Murrayshall Quarry driveway.
- If it isn't blocked by film security, turn left and follow the drive northwest until you reach the Quarry Trail. Use that to return to the Old Drove Road car park.

Alternatively, you can pass the Murrayshall Quarry driveway and continue east on Gateside Road until you reach Polmaise Road.

- Turn left and follow Polmaise Road north, continuing as it curves east and then north again.
- When Polmaise Road turns sharply right and crosses over the M9, continue straight ahead (northwest) and you'll be on St. Ninians Road.
- Follow St. Ninians Road until you see the Community Centre on your right.

Learn More About Cambusbarron:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambusbarron>

<http://cambusbarron.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/cambusbarron>

To see additional site photos, go to the **Cambusbarron** board on our **Outlandish Scotland Journey Pinterest Site**:

<https://www.pinterest.com/chasOSJ/cambusbarron/>

Remember that this chapter is being published as a “work in progress!”

Be sure to check the **Part 4 OutlanderLinks** directory often. Updated information available after *Outlandish Scotland Journey* is published will be posted there.

<http://outlandishscotland.com/part-four-outlanderlinks/>

Time & Travel: **Cambusbarron**

Visiting Time

At this point, we have no idea how much time it will take to visit Murrayshall Quarry. Let's go with at least 90 minutes—possibly 2 hours.

If you'll also be trekking to Murray's Woods, add another hour for the short trek ... another 2 hours for the long trek.

Hours of Operation

Murrayshall Quarry and Murray's Woods aren't official tourist destinations. It is best to visit only during daylight hours—allowing plenty of time to make it back to your car or the bus stop before dusk.

Admission Fees

None.

That said, please consider donating to the Save Gillies Hill fund.

http://savegillieshill.org.uk/what_you_can_do_to_help.html

Public Transportation Directions

Use Traveline Scotland to plan your journey.

<http://www.travelinescotland.com/>

Your Cambusbarron destination bus stop is:
Cambusbarron, Opp Library On St Ninians Road

Driving Directions

Cambusbarron Community Centre's small car park

(Map point **A**) coordinates:

56.108424, -3.965984

The little car park at Old Drove Road

(Map point **B**) coordinates:

56.107722, -3.976130

The short Murray's Wood trailhead

(Map point **C**) coordinates:

56.105078, -3.992942