

## **The Ramblers - St Andrews & N.E. Fife Group**

Eleven walkers gathered on a fine summer morning for St Andrews & North East Fife Ramblers' circular 7.5-mile walk starting from West Wemyss harbour. We were pleased to welcome three visitors along with our regular stalwarts as we set off eastwards along the Fife Coastal Path. The first point of interest, Wemyss Castle, where Mary Queen of Scots first met Lord Darnley, almost eluded our walk leader (aka your correspondent) for the second time, despite its depiction in a local guide book as 'dominating the view'. In her defence, the view out to sea is also fairly compelling! On reaching East Wemyss we paused for refreshments in a pleasant open space where we admired the many creative artistic and floral exhibits on display. Continuing along the coastal path we reached the Wemyss Caves, renowned for their Pictish symbols. Here your correspondent, having undertaken a little research, had intended to inform the group that 'wemyss' is derived from the Scottish Gaelic for 'cave', but her thunder had been stolen earlier by a fellow walker better versed in the subject. The path then took us up a flight of steps to reach the impressive ruin of MacDuff's castle before heading inland. After crossing the main road we entered a shaded woodland path, emerging onto a football pitch and a convenient grassy slope which provided a pleasant place to stop for lunch. Suitably refreshed we followed the route of an old mineral railway line with trees and a burn to our left, fields to our right and some persistent nettles hovering at the edge of the path. Crossing the burn, we turned back in the direction of Coaltown of Wemyss and took the Red Ash Trail to reach the village. The last stage of our walk took us along the tree-lined driveway of Wemyss Castle followed by a final woodland path which led us downhill and back into West Wemyss.



*MacDuff's Castle*

For the time being we are still keeping our walks local to Fife, with a maximum of 15 people on each walk. Details of our walks – which are open to guests as well as members of Ramblers – can be found on our website [www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com](http://www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com)