

present site overlooking the harbour. The castle was believed to be used as the resting place on the mainland for some of the ancient Scottish Kings whose remains were later transported across the sea to be buried on the holy island of Iona located to the south of Mull. The castle has certainly had royal connections. Here, Robert II signed several more Royal Charters and it remained occupied until its roof blew off during a violent storm in 1739. While the castle walls are still intact, it is in need of repair, refurbishment and long-term maintenance. The Friends of Portencross castle have laboured tirelessly and raised thousands of pounds in order to preserve the castle and have succeeded in securing substantial funding to make sure the castle survives for generations to come.



Continuing along the path, a short walk from Portencross village lies the cliff feature Ardneil Bank. Part of the cliff is known as The Three Sisters, apparently quite a challenging rock climb. Within the cliff lies the historic cave associated with St Kentigern better known as St Mungo.

The story goes that he used the cave as a refuge from Glasgow. Nearby there was a well which at one time was a popular pilgrimage due to its curative waters.

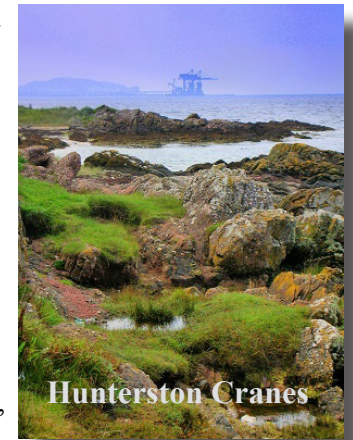
A little further along and you will reach the site of one of Scotland's nuclear power stations – Hunterston B. (Hunterston A is nearby and is now being decommissioned). This massive industrial building has a net electrical output of 1,215 MW and is capable of producing power to a million homes. This is the third nuclear reactor in Scotland, along with Torness on the east coast and Dounreay on the far northern coast of Scotland. Like all the nuclear power stations in Scotland they are due to be closed to make way for more



renewable and safer energy and the estimated decommissioning date for Hunterston B is 2016.

Further north at Hunterston you will see two cranes that can be seen for miles around.

These massive cranes were part of the Hunterston Ore Terminal where they were built to handle iron ore for British Steel's Ravenscraig steelworks in Motherwell. Existing facilities on the River Clyde were unsuitable for increasingly large vessels, but Hunterston, with its one-mile long jetty, is able to handle modern ships of any size. Of course the project was doomed after the closure of Ravenscraig, and the demise of British Steel. Various suggestions have been made regarding the future of the site, including building a new coal fired power station using carbon capture to minimise the environmental impact, but to date no decisions have been made as to the future of the site.



A little further on just beyond the car park and picnic area is Fairlie. This village started life in the 12th Century when the Boyle family came to Kelburn when the castle was built in 1581. Kelburn is thought to be the oldest castle in Scotland to have been continuously inhabited by the same family. Originally the family name was de Boyville but this changed over the years to Boyle. The de Boyvilles from Caen in Normandy came over to Britain with William the Conqueror in 1066. the Kelburn estate lies to the north of Fairlie but there is another castle called Fairlie castle that lies at the foot of Fairlie glen. In the 13th century the land of Fairlie was held by the de Ros (or Ross) family of Tarbert, the land to the North was held by the Boyles and to the South by the Sempills.

It was one of the sons of the Ross family who built the Fairlie Castle and adopted the name Fairlie. The family continued to live in the Castle until the 17th century, but by the end of the 19th century the castle was in ruins. The Castle was sold in 1999 and is to be converted into a private residence.