

## Leven to Pittenweem 17 Miles.

here during the second world war. Elie grew up around the natural safe haven of the bay and became a burgh of barony in 1589. In 1885 the harbour was improved and a road was built on top of the causeway. The bay is used for a variety of recreational pursuits including wind surfing, kayaking,



dingy sailing etc. In the summer when the tide is out the sandy bay is sometimes used as a cricket pitch! Walk down towards the harbour - the building at the end of the harbour was a granary but has now been converted into self catering flats. They won a prestigious architectural award for their interior design. The path now goes off to the left near the Ship Inn into the area known as Ruby Bay. This was so named because of the large garnet that was once found there. Here there is another lovely beach with ample car parking behind. Leave the beach and follow the path across the grass towards the point. Ahead is the 'Lady's Tower' that rests above the rocks at Elie Ness. It was designed and built for Lady Janet Anstruther who resided in the village. She used it to change before going for her daily swim in the waters below. It is said that prior to her walk to the tower, a bell ringer would precede her ringing a warning bell in order to alert the locals to stay away whilst she bathed. Lady Janet was responsible for the removal of the village of Balclevie in 1771 in order that she could have a better view from Elie house.



It is said that because of this a local woman put a curse on the Anstruther family and predicted that the family would cease to live in the house after six generations. Strangely enough, this prediction has since come true. Although now a ruin, the fireplace and chimney are still visible and there are commanding views from the windows that take in Elie Lighthouse to the west and St Monans to the east.

The next leg of the walk goes from Elie to the fishing village of St Monans, a distance of just over two miles. Just before the village is reached, the path



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skirts the ruins of Newark Castle. This ancient pile was originally in the possession of Sir Alan Durward, the brother in law of Alexander III, before ownership passed to the Sandilands family in 1545. A century later, in 1649, bankruptcy forced this family into the sale of the castle, this time to the Covenanting General Sir David Leslie who guided his army against Oliver Cromwell in 1651. Unfortunately for Leslie his fate was to spend time in the tower of London after his army was defeated at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. There he was confined until 1660 when Charles II reached the throne and the 6th Earl of Newark was conferred upon him. After Leslie's death, the castle passed through several different families.



A little further on and the path enters St Monans. No one really knows who St Monan was although he may have been an Irish missionary companion to St Aidan; there was a shrine to him on the shore by the 9th Century. The

shrine was said to provide healing powers to arriving pilgrims to the area. Gradually a settlement grew which provided shelter and souvenirs to pilgrims travelling to Andrews. The old Kirk at St Monans is another ancient building steeped in history. David II of Scotland ordered that it be built after he survived a storm on the Forth in 1362. If the door to the church is open then have a look inside and you will see two models of ships hanging from the roof either side of the transept – an indication of this area's strong connection with the sea.



The path now runs around the side of the harbour of which the central pier dates from 1596. The town's close association with the sea is reflected in its motto - Mare Vivimus,