

## Join SWACS...

If you would like to join **Save Wemyss Ancient Caves Society**, complete this form and return with your remittance (details below) to the Membership Secretary:

Paul McFarlane,  
Flat 12/15, Albion Gardens,  
Edinburgh, EH7 5NS.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Adult...£4 Senior / Junior...£3

Family...£6 Group / Company...£10

Registered Charity SC023862

## Where to find the Wemyss Caves...

The map shows the coastline to the east of East Wemyss:



Please note: It is not advisable for you to enter the caves without a SWACS guide.

To find out more, including how to book cave tours, visit the **Save Wemyss Ancient Caves Society** website:

**[www.wemysscaves.org](http://www.wemysscaves.org)**

# WEMYSS CAVES



The Wemyss Caves are situated along the coast of the Firth of Forth just to the east of the village of East Wemyss in Fife.

They are famous for the ancient Pictish and other carvings to be found on their walls. Although of national and even international importance, these caves are in danger from vandalism, coastal erosion, and other environmental factors.

## Save Wemyss Ancient Caves Society

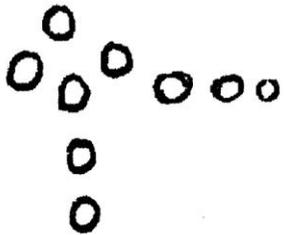
SWACS is a registered charity, formed in 1986 in order to protect and preserve this precious piece of our heritage and to gain for it the public recognition that the site deserves.

The society is staffed entirely by volunteers and is always looking to welcome new people who want to join our work.

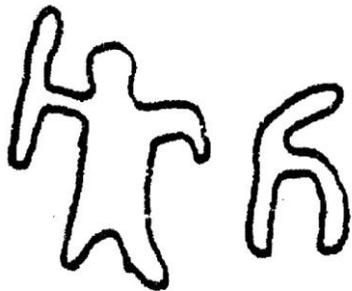
## COURT CAVE

This is the first cave you reach when walking from East Wemyss. It consists of a passageway, now bricked up at one end, and a larger chamber behind. The cave is believed to have got its name from its use as a place to hold court sessions in the Middle Ages.

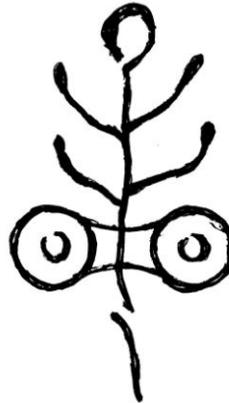
There are two carvings in the passageway. One is a collection of cup marks that possibly date back to the Bronze Age:



The other shows a hunting scene. Some believe the figure to represent the Viking god Thor:



In the main chamber is a large frieze of mainly Pictish carvings. We can recognize them from the use of typically Pictish symbols such as the double-disk and floriated rod, both of which are combined in this carving:



## DOO CAVE

Also known as Doocote or Dovecote Cave, this one lies a little further along the coast. As the name suggests, the cave was once used to house pigeons. A large number of nesting boxes have been carved into the stone walls.

There are no carvings present here, but there used to be a West Doo Cave where there were plenty to be found. A gun emplacement on the ground above during the First World War caused a collapse and – if anything does remain of them – the carvings are no longer accessible.

## WELL CAVE

There are three caves in the cliff face at the back of Castle Green just below Macduff Castle. The middle one is the Well Cave. For hundreds of years, up until the early part of the twentieth century, the young people of East Wemyss used to celebrate Handsel Monday – the first Monday of the New Year – with a torchlight procession to this cave.

## JONATHAN'S CAVE

Beyond Castle Green, you eventually come to the cave that is now called Jonathan's Cave. There are many carvings along its west wall. This fish is one example:



There is only one carving on the east wall – a Viking-style boat – but it is possibly the oldest known carving of a boat in Scotland.

