

**SUBJECT TITLE: CAIPLIE CAVES, KILRENNY, FIFE**

**Warning:** Exposed anchorage. Landing hampered by sharp reefs running out to the south west. Special care is required with inflatables. Many creel markers to be avoided. All the usual warnings regarding cave exploration apply.

**Location description:** Halfway between Anstruther and Crail, Fife.

**Chart No:** Imray C27 Firth of Forth      **Lat/Long:** 56<sup>0</sup> 14'.6 N 02<sup>0</sup> 38'.7 W

**OS 1:50,000 sheet number:** 59      **National Grid Ref.:** NO 599058 Caiplie Caves, NO 5990581 Hermit's Well.

**Subject description:** Shallow caves in a prominent calcareous sandstone outcrop with a conspicuous cave mouth visible from seaward. The caves bear incised markings of early Christian and Pictish origin and have associations with St Aidan. See the accompanying article for a descriptive list of the caves.

**Approach by sea:** There are no off-lying dangers but the area has numerous creel markers.

**Directions by land:** Follow the sign posted Fife coastal footpath east from Anstruther or west from Crail. Alternatively see OS sheet 59 and find the way down from the coast road.

**Anchoring / Mooring:** Anchor off in 5 metres. A very exposed anchorage vulnerable rapid change in sea conditions due to sea breezes which get up very quickly in sunny conditions. For this reason a morning visit is recommended as the heat of the afternoon sun is more inclined to generate sea breezes.

**Landing:** A difficult landing due to sharp reefs running out in a south westerly direction. At half tide one or more of these to the south west of the caves can provide some shelter for flat rocks on which a dinghy can be hauled out.

**References / weblinks:**

1. Royal Commission for Ancient and Historical Monuments Scotland (RCAHMS) database – Archaeology Notes and 13 item reference list.

[http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/pls/portal/newcanmore.details\\_gis?inumlink=34025](http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/pls/portal/newcanmore.details_gis?inumlink=34025)

2. Joan E.L. Murray (1963), "Rock-cut symbols in Caiplie Caves", Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 94, 1960-61, 324-5 includes a drawing and photograph of the incised markings in Chapel Cave.

[http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/PSAS\\_2002/pdf/vol\\_094/94\\_324\\_325.pdf](http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/PSAS_2002/pdf/vol_094/94_324_325.pdf)

3. "The Caves of Scotland", Tony Oldham, published by Tony Oldham, 1975.

**Photographs:** See the accompanying article and reference 2.

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