

## 3.5 Carradale to Campbeltown

53

57

**Distance** 21.2 miles 34.1 km

**Terrain** roadside and woodland paths, minor roads then shoreline rock-hopping; forest roads, lengthy forest road walk from Lussa Loch to Corrylach; then tarmac in Campbeltown

**Grade** stiff ascent from Torrisdale and descent to Ifferdale, then a tough climb to 285 m/935 ft before dropping down to Lussa Loch and gentler gradients

**Food and drink** café within distillery at Torrisdale

**Summary** a very long and demanding day, but generally rewarding; tide awareness essential for Carradale Bay; varied views from forest and minor roads



- From the Blackbird Tearoom, cross the B879. Turn left for 25 m then bear right at a junction with a Kintyre Way information board towards a caravan park. Just 50 m further on go right along a path signposted Sally's Walk.
- Cross a footbridge and bear right, following the path for 700 m to the B842. Turn left across Carradale Water, then immediately left again to walk beside the river. Within 100 m consult the Kintyre Way information board with Carradale Bay tide times: part of the route ahead is impassable at high tide.
- Continue to a minor road, then go left and soon, beyond a bridge over Carradale Water, left again towards Waterfoot. Follow this road, then a vehicle track overlooking Carradale Bay.



*Beside Torrisdale Bay*



- From the end of the track, cross shingle, then negotiate about 50 m of rock-hopping, to reach tidal grassland. Keep close to the landward cliffs for easier going.
- Another stretch along the rocky shore leads to a small cove. Cross the burn then turn inland.
- Go up to the edge of a grassy bank, veer left for a short distance almost as far as a gully. Swing right and walk up the field to a stile over the fence.

#### High tide alternative

From the road bridge continue along the B842 with great care. It leads steeply up and around a sharp bend and on for 1.2 km to rejoin the main route at a KTW information board and blue marker post.

- Cross the road and continue down, past houses left and right, across a small burn. About 500 m from the marker post, turn right between imposing gate posts with a white cottage on right, into the grounds of Torrisdale Castle.
- Enter the Torrisdale Estate: the sign welcomes walkers to the next 1.5 miles along the 'Gintyre Way'. This refers to Beinn an Tuirc, the sustainable distillery ahead. It has a café and offers gin tours and tastings: [www.kintyregin.com](http://www.kintyregin.com).
- Follow the well signposted track through the grounds of the castle (dating back to early 19th century) with fine mixed woodland, colourful in autumn.
- At a signposted junction, turn right towards Lephincorrach (among several places) and further on, go left again.
- Walk through the farm and past the distillery (or visit it). At a junction here turn right, then go through a small gate. You gain height steadily, round a right-hand bend then on the next, left bend there's a small three-sided shelter. Continue up, passing a KTW distance marker indicating that you've reached about half-way on the full distance of 101 miles.
- About 100 m short of the forest ahead, at a Y-junction, bear left and go down along the track below the forest. After heavy rain there's an impressive waterfall on Lephincorrach Burn nearby.
- Then, beside a weir, follow a path between the stream and the forest. A sign thanks you for walking the 'Gintyre Way'.
- Within 100 m cross a footbridge and follow a fairly clear path steeply up across moorland, its gradient easing eventually. The path bends and at mile 51.3 reaches a forest road: turn left to contour the shoulder of the hill.
- About 850 m further on, turn sharp left at a track junction to contour another hill. After 450 m on this track, turn right down a path that descends (steeply in places) for 1.4 km through plantation, into the deep glen of Ifferdale Burn.
- Near the bottom of this path the going underfoot can be muddy during and after wet weather. At the field edge bear left, cross a small burn, go through a gate and cross the field ahead to exit it by another gate.
- At mile 53.3 there's a choice: turn left for Ifferdale Bunkhouse and/or Saddell Abbey (see page 54). Walk past Ifferdale Farm and follow the vehicle track east down Saddell Glen for 2.5 km. At the B842 turn right to reach Saddell Abbey within 400 m. To resume the Way afterwards, see the box on page 55.
- To continue on the Way, instead turn right at mile 53.3 and resume on page 55.



Torrisdale Castle

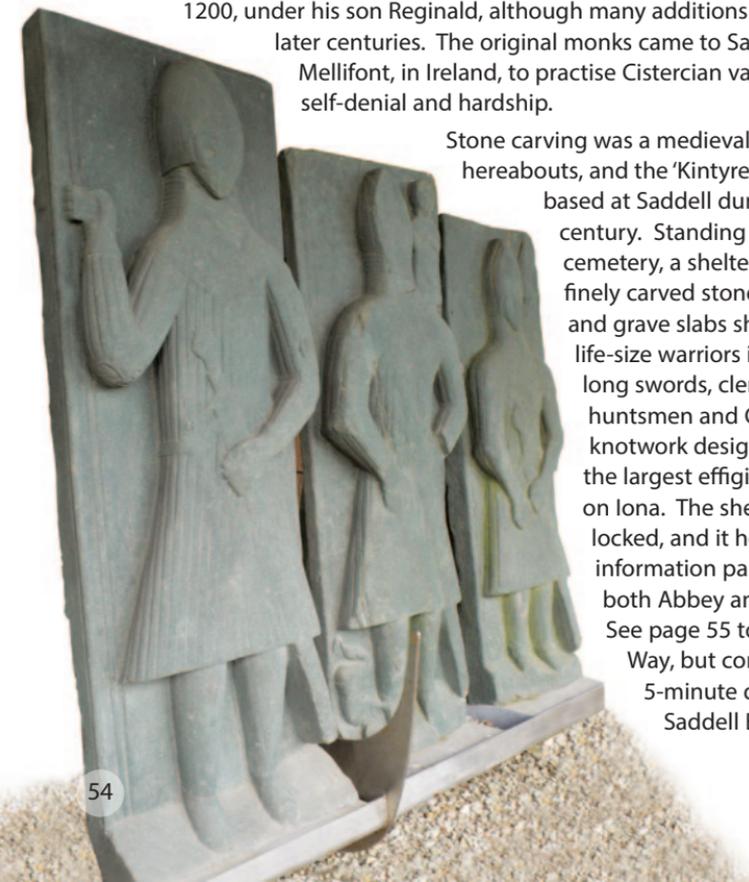


*Saddell Abbey nave and choir, from the south*

## Saddell Abbey and Stones

In the 12th century, Somerled, leader of the struggle against Viking occupation, granted land to the Bishop of Armagh to create an Abbey at Saddell. Building began about 1150, but Somerled was killed in 1164, and his body brought to Saddell for burial. The Abbey was completed soon after 1200, under his son Reginald, although many additions were made in later centuries. The original monks came to Saddell from Mellifont, in Ireland, to practise Cistercian values of self-denial and hardship.

Stone carving was a medieval speciality hereabouts, and the 'Kintyre School' was based at Saddell during the 15th century. Standing in its cemetery, a shelter houses 12 finely carved stones – sculptures and grave slabs showing life-size warriors in armour with long swords, clerics, ships, huntsmen and Celtic knotwork designs. Four of the largest effigies were made on Iona. The shelter is never locked, and it houses information panels about both Abbey and carvings. See page 55 to resume the Way, but consider a 5-minute detour to Saddell Bay first.



## Resuming the Way after Saddell

- After the Abbey, there's no need to retrace your steps: follow the B842 south as it hairpins steeply uphill: caution is needed, especially on blind corners.
  - Within 1.3 km, look for a waymarker turning you right and off-road, through an open gate. Follow this broad forest road as it climbs steadily at first, with great views mainly to your right, at first over Saddell Bay and Arran, soon over the Glen.
  - After more than 1.5 km or so, bear right at the Y-junction, cross a stream and continue on the road as it hairpins uphill.
  - The road levels out, then descends gently in a series of bends to another Y-junction, with Kintyre Way panel, almost 1 mile (1.5 km) after the first. Bear left uphill to resume the Way southward.
- 
- After the right turn (page 52, last bullet) pass Ifferdale Cottage within 300 m and re-enter the forest. For the next 1.5 miles (2.5 km), follow the way-marked forest road, ignoring all turn-offs – at first it heads south-west, then swings east and finally south.
  - At mile 56, reach a Y-junction with a KTW panel marking where the return route from Saddell rejoins the Way. Turn right to head west.
  - Soon the road starts to descend above Bordadubh Water; ignore a track to the right and continue down to another junction overlooked by the derelict Bord a Dubh cottage, at mile 58.9. The small grove of trees nearby is Hughie's Wood, planted in memory of forester Hugh Macmillan (1927-1990) who was brought up in the cottage.

*East over Saddell Bay, to Arran*

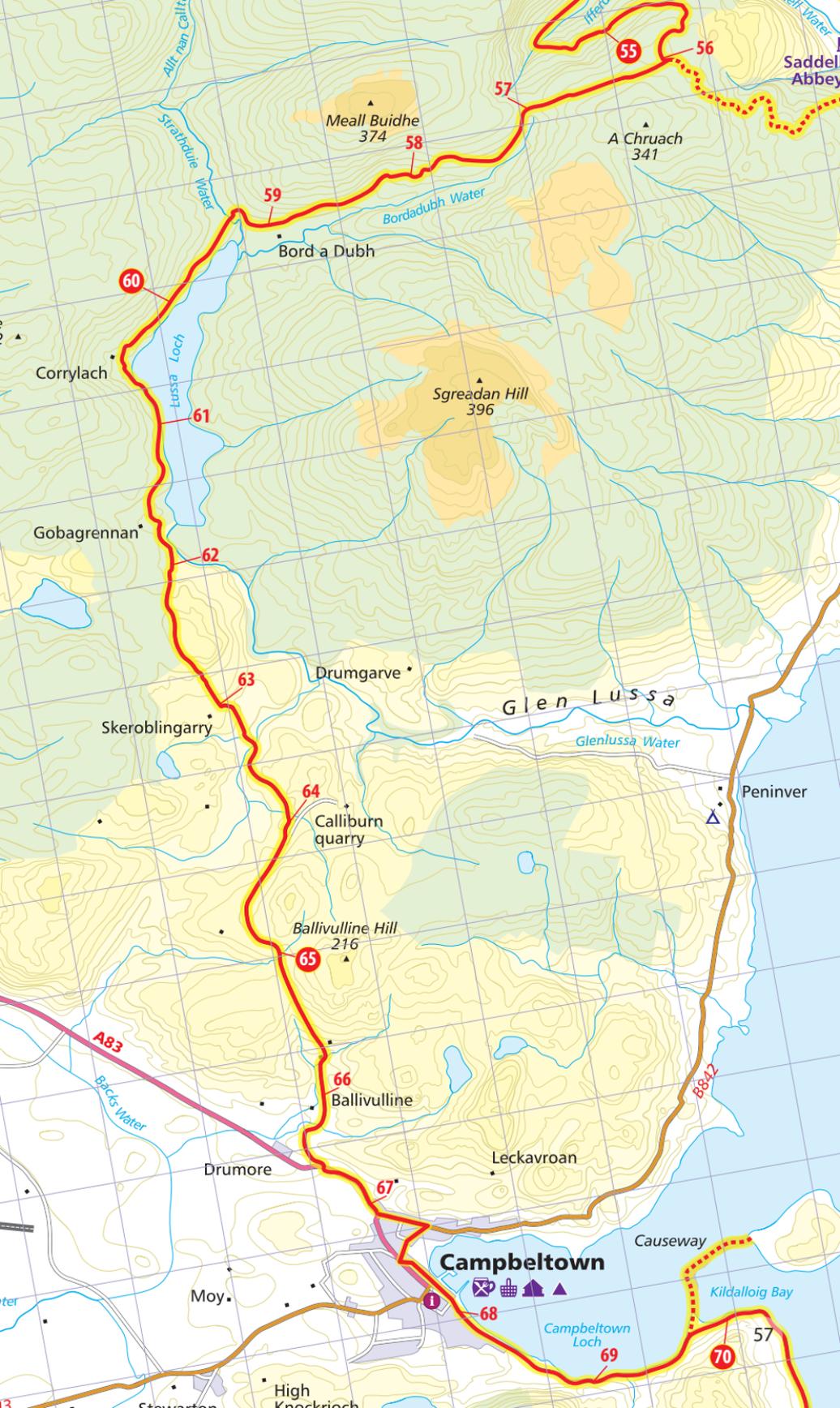


*Cottages at Corrylach*

- Ignoring path junctions on your right, cross Strathduie Water at the northern end of Loch Lussa (with good trout fishing). Continue beside its western shore.
- After about one mile of shore, pass two cottages at Corrylach. Soon the loose-surfaced road gives way to tarmac, with a walkable verge, beside the shore.
- After another mile, the Way bears right at a junction near Gobagrennan Farm; you may prefer to bear left briefly to divert to the end of the loch (mile 61.7).
- The road rises to a crest then descends into a wide valley, leading south on an undulating route. It climbs quite steeply and after Calliburn quarry reaches a high point at mile 64.6, from which Machrihanish comes into view to the west.
- The descent towards Campbeltown soon begins in earnest. At mile 66.5, reach the A83, cross to a roadside path and turn left.
- Approaching and within Campbeltown, waymarkers are sparse or absent: refer to the plan on page 59. Turn left at the Dellwood Hotel on Dalaruan Street, with a well-tended flower bed opposite. After 450 m, turn right just before Glen Scotia Distillery and follow Saddell Street and Lochend Street for 400 m.
- Turn sharp left on Aqualibrium Avenue, and after 120 m bear right at the Aqualibrium on Kinloch Road, soon passing the bus terminus, seated area, flower-beds and information board.
- Reach a roundabout at the Old Quay: the Way continues ahead but turn right to detour up Main Street with the Argyll Arms and Keeping it Local information centre.
- The Way continues past the harbour with RNLI station: note that tide times are displayed in its shop. Follow the esplanade past the CalMac ferry terminal.

*Lussa Loch*





## Campbeltown, 'The Wee Toon'



*Dawn over Campbeltown harbour*

With a population of around 4800, Campbeltown has more than half the citizens of Kintyre. Popularly known as 'The Wee Toon', it's the local centre for services, with a range of shops, choice of accommodation, hospital, library, museum, heritage centre and cinema. In the days when steamers plied daily between here and Glasgow, the town was a Clyde coastal resort, busy with visitors, as well as a prosperous fishing harbour with over 400 herring boats and 34 distilleries. In 1900 Campbeltown had the highest per capita income in Scotland and more than 8000 residents. See page 72 for the former railway connection to Machrihanish.

Nowadays Campbeltown's railway is long gone, and little remains of its once-thriving fishing and distilling industries: see also page 72. Forestry, farming and tourism are the mainstays of the local economy, boosted by the annual music festival during August and the Kintyre Way Ultra in May: see page 75.



The legacy of this affluent era is obvious in the grand Victorian and Edwardian buildings surrounding Campbeltown Loch. Many leading Glasgow architects commuted by steamer to supervise their building projects, giving rise to the designation 'Glasgow's extreme western suburb'.

Start by visiting the Keeping it Local centre in Main Street for visitor information. The Heritage Centre, Lorne and Lowland Church, Museum and Picture House are all nearby.

Notice the Campbeltown Cross on its roundabout near the Old Quay. It was probably carved in about 1380 at the Saddell Abbey workshop: see page 54. The photograph shows intricate carvings of knots and foliage on its western side, but notice the careful defacement of its eastern aspect. During the Reformation, zealous Protestants removed the images of crucifixion and madonna with child. The mermaid atop the western face, however, survived intact.



Campbeltown Cross

