

Join the tour of mysterious Castle Stalker



Sine Pickles, centre, with son John and daughter-in-law Rebecca live in the castle during their holidays to Appin. t36sta04

CASTLE Stalker has become a focal point for the communities of Appin and Port Appin and its presence has produced one of the most picturesque settings in Scotland. The castle, believed to have been built around 1320, was merely a ruin for many years until 1965 when Lt Col D R Stewart Allward bought the castle and, over the next 10 years, rebuilt Castle Stalker making it fully habitable. Lt Col Allward died in 1991 and his four children are now part owners of the castle. While daughters Sine Pickles and Morag Allward live in London, sons Ross and Alasdair Allward live in Duror and Port Appin respectively. The inside of the castle remains a mystery to many throughout North Lorn but the Allwards have gone some way to address this by organising tours of the castle. These tours, although infrequent, are a real eye-opener as to how a 14th century castle would look and are held when the family visits on holiday.

The tour takes guests from the basement, where livestock would have been kept, up to the great hall. Rising further, the tour party is taken to the bedrooms and the family's living room where a television is one of the few indicators of 21st century inhabitation. The high point of the tour, literally, is when the tour party steps out onto the battlements to capture a panoramic view of Appin. Throughout the castle is evidence of Lt Col Allward's fondness for collectables with everything from a large chest dating back to 1649, to rifles, armour and even Samurai Warrior armour. Sine Pickles said: 'When we come up here from London we get the piece and quiet and the pace of life is so different. 'It is fun showing people what my father did to restore the castle.' A history of the castle, pictures, a virtual tour and details of tours from Appin can be found at www.castlestalker.com



Castle Stalker is an imposing feature on the views around Appin. t36sta03



Castle Stalker provides a peaceful setting for North Lorn's wildlife. t36sta01



Robert, left, and Kai Horne from Appin were keen to try this old helmet for size during the tour of the castle. t36sta05