

PHOTOS BY ELEANOR

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Clyde & Eleanor's Trip to Scotland

March 18th - April 8th, 1999

2,776 Miles Driven

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£ = \$1.68

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Ready or not, here we come! We usually have a year and a half between trips to Britain. However, this time it is just 5 months since our last trip. We didn't get to the north of mainland Scotland in 10/98 to complete our assignments. The focus of the 98 trip was the west coast and the Outer Hebrides, Arran and the Edinburgh area. At the time of that trip, the southwest was having severe storms resulting in much flooding that precluded travel to that part of Scotland.

We both worked a half day on St. Patrick's Day, 3/17, then drove to San Francisco for the Park & Fly package at the El Rancho Best Western Motel in Millbrae (\$135 for one night's lodging and parking the car for three weeks). It was nice to sleep until 730am on 3/18 as our flight didn't leave until 1245pm. The El Rancho included a continental breakfast in the package. We scheduled the shuttle for 930am to take us and our bags to the airport. We would be early, but it was nice not to have to rush.

As 1230pm approached, we heard the announcement that our plane was late coming into San Francisco. The departure time for our flight to London was now 155pm. I worked on the maps plotting the castle assignments where they were located. Looks like we'll be going to many new places and back to a few locations that we were close to on previous trips.

A woman sitting across from us was excitedly talking about seeing London and taking a train to Paris and back to London. She had several travel books and maps including Rik Steve's 1999 Britain & Ireland Guide. She asked us how long will we be in Scotland, then she indicated she has only three days for her travel. She flies home on Monday, 3/22. She didn't want to hear the advise from her fellow travelers that she should stay in London as you can't see London in 3 days much less Paris and London, oh well!

We're finally on the plane at 2pm ready to leave and the pilot announces that due to strong winds, only two runways are open to both arriving and departing planes. We're 20th in line, we'll never make our connecting 9am flight to Glasgow. The plane took off at 246pm, we're tired and hungry. The flight soon settled down, the cocktails would relax us. The stewardess gave us just one bottle of spirits, usually two per person was provided. When I asked her about the second one, she snippily responded that UAL will be lucky to give everyone one, the supply wasn't refreshed due to the plane's late arrival at SFO. She said she would bring another drink to us later on if there were extras. We never saw her again, oh well.

We tried to sleep and may have nodded off for an hour or more. We reached Heathrow's airspace to find another delay, this time it was 15 minutes before we could land. We circled above the airport until we're allowed to land. It was 820am when the plane arrived to the gate, another 15 minutes to deplane. UAL announced that a bus is waiting for passengers having connecting flights to Terminal 1 so we can make

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our connections. We were told it would take only 10 minutes to reach the British Midlands (BM) terminal. We arrived at the BM counter at 855am and were told the 9am flight to Glasgow was closed and we'll have to wait for the 11am flight. We tried talking the attendant into letting us board since the plane was still here, no luck though. The attendant said UAL didn't call to notify connecting airlines that we'll be late. UAL called BM to reserve seats for us on the next flight to Glasgow.

The BM flight left promptly at 11am. Clyde had a snack and I slept, couldn't keep my eyes open. The approximately one hour flight arrived on time, next stop is baggage claim. All our bags arrived except the big case. Several other people had bags missing as we found out when we went to the office to report missing bags. Evidently one lorry of bags missed our flight. The airlines will call us when the bags arrived. One man was missing all his bags! We would be fine, until the bags arrived. We gave the office Jim & Viv's phone number, good thing I packed their letter with the phone number and address of the Bed & Breakfast (B&B) in our carry on bags. Next stop was the car, we had reserved a car through National, they had a desk in the Alamo office just outside the terminal. We have a green Nissan with four doors with a good size trunk.

After checking out the controls of the car, we ventured onto the M8 motorway to Loch Winnoch to the B&B. Clyde remembered the way to Jim & Viv's. At first no one answered the door bell, then Clyde saw Jim outside. He gave us a big hug, Viv was in the back doing laundry. It was good to see them both again. Viv had just been to the hospital with a bad case of the flu which turned into a ear infection that affected her equilibrium. They recently had been on holiday, a well deserved get away after being in pain (kidney problem) for so long. We were given the same room we had on our last trip, room #6 at the top of the stairs. We told them we would be down after we crashed for a few hours, it was now 230pm. We woke at 6pm had a banana and my sandwich from the BM flight then back to bed for the night. We woke a couple of times but not for long. The Garnock Lodge, Jim & Vivienne McMeechan, great B&B. They're located on the Boydstone Rd., Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire, PA12 4JT, tele 01505 503680; £ 76 for two nights, ensuite, great view from the bedroom window of the country side.

Saturday, 20 March

Breakfast was scheduled for 830am, we were the only guests (even though I thought I heard someone in the next room). Guests were given a menu of breakfast selections upon arrival. I ordered Kippers and Clyde had bacon and scrambled eggs after delicious and creamy porridge. Jim and Viv joined us with a cup of tea. They said it has been a mild winter, the daffodils had just opened. Earlier in the winter, they had three periods of storms that had heavy winds. Christmas week, New Years week and another one later. Jim lost five trees, big trees that were hundreds of years old. After two months of cleaning the debris, the Culzean Castle was planning to open again at Easter (4/4). Culzean lost over 100 very large and old trees. They thought the best weather in Scotland is April and September as these months were usually the driest.

We're on the road early for our fist day, at 1015am to find the first assignment, the Auchmead Farm Home. The skies were gray and it was sprinkling. The farm was less than 10 minutes from the B&B, however, it was raining hard when we found the farm. Clyde asked at two houses if they knew where the Acuhmead Farm was. The owner of the first house hadn't lived in the area for long and couldn't help us. We then went back to the Auchmead Terrace, the resident was old enough to know the area but he didn't. He said it might be down the next turn. We found a private road going to a farm, this was it but no

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one was home. A car turned into the drive as we were leaving. Jim had called the Auchmead Farm a few months ago to ask if we could take photos of his farm. James said it would be fine for us to return tomorrow for photos if the rain stopped.

First photos were taken of the Chapelton House in Ayrshire, a nice country hotel. There are 35 different golf courses within 35 minutes of Chapelton. The Royal Troon is just 15 minutes away, we stopped there on the last trip. We're looking for the Robertland Castle, we asked two people on the streets if they knew where the Robertland was. Neither of the two men knew where it was, didn't even know there was a castle here. We saw a fenced off area with an old stone markings on the fence that had the name Cunningham Watt Park, this assignment was from the Cunningham Family. Back in the car and drove around the village and found an old section of a tower house. This must be the Robertland Castle, I climbed the fence and walked out to the ruins, the moat could still be seen. This was it! It must have been a large castle in its day. This is the Robertland area, our 1999 map has a castle symbol (no name) where this tower is and another castle map confirmed it was the Robertland Castle. This the site of the 16th century tower house, on which the existing Robertland was built about 1804. The property belonged to the Cunninghams. David Cunningham of Robertland with others of his family, was responsible for the shooting of Hew Montgomery, 4th Earl of Eglinton in 1586. Cunningham and his companions were hunted down and slain but the feud between the families lasted another 20 years. Sir William Cunningham of Robertland was a friend of Robert Burns.

Next stop was the Rowallan Castle, not an assignment but it was on the map and we were close. The entrance gate was closed and the sign said it wasn't opened to the public. The door in the gate opened, then I saw a sign telling visitors to check in at the gate house. No one was home so I walked down the path to find the castle. The Rowallan is a fine courtyard building most of which is still roofed. Twin towers guard the entrance passage which has a guardroom off of it. The castle has numerous decorative features including cable moldings, armorial panels, gunloops and decorative stonework. The castle was the home of the Muirs of Rowallan. Gilchrist Muir built the original tower on lands granted to him by Alexander III after the Battle of Largs (1263). Elizabeth Muir was the first wife of King Robert II. Mungo Muir was killed at Flodden in 1513 and his son, John at Pinkie in 1547. In the 17th century the castle belonged to Sir William Muir, a noted covenanter. The castle buildings occupy three sides of a square, the medieval tower forms part of the north range to the right of the entrance. The south range was added 1513-47; the fore work and back curtain 1547-91. The castle was later owned by the Earl's of Glasgow (Boyle) and the Campbell Earls of Loudoun before being acquired by the Corbett Lords Rowallan. The castle is located in Kilmaurs in Ayrshire.

Another castle book reported the Rowallan was at one time surrounded by marshland. It consists of two ranges of buildings and a drum towered gatehouse around a courtyard, of which the last side is completed by a wall. The oldest part of the castle is a range of buildings with a vaulted basement that was built during the 16th century. The gatehouse of three stories and an attic dates from 1562. A 17th century range is ruinous. Rowallan originally belonged to the Comyns.

Next stop was the village of Stair. We took photos of the Stair House on our last trip, however, the requester for this assignment didn't think it was the correct building. He said it was a large older castle. The Stair House was the only part of the original castle that remained. The original keep was added to create the Stair House. The Earl of Stair died a few years ago. This was the Estate of the Stair Family, it had to be sold into smaller parcels some years ago. It is all privately owned now. Stair is located 3 miles

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south of Tarbolton on a minor road east of B730, just south of the River of Ayr at Stair. Stair is a 16th century L plan tower house of three stories to which has been added later wings, which were in turn extended in the 17th century. A square tower projects at one corner and a round tower at another. An extension of two stories with a round tower dates from the late 17th century as does a three story extension with another round stair-tower. The walls are pierced by shot holes. The entrance has been moved.

The lands belonged to the Montgomerys but passed by marriage to Sir John Kennedy of Dunmure in the 16th century, then to the Dalrymples of Stair in 1450. The Dalrymples fought against Mary, Queen of Scots, at the Battle of Langside in 1568. They had to flee Scotland in the 1660s after supporting Cromwell but returned with William of Orange and were made Viscounts Stair in 1690. One of the family, John Dalrymple, Master of Stair, was responsible for the Massacre of Glencoe in 1692 and made Earl of Stair in 1703. The property passed from the family in the 18th century but was recovered about 1826.

The Stair Family now lives in the Stranraer area at the Lochinch Castle. Stranraer is at least an 1.5 hour drive south. We'll go there tomorrow, there isn't enough daylight left. We'll stop at the Morehouse assignment in Ayr no luck. I went to the library to see if they could find the Morehouse. Couldn't find the Library but found the visitors center. They couldn't find it on their maps, she gave me directions to the library, but we couldn't find it. We'll head north back to the B&B and find dinner along the way.

The Red Lion Pub located in Prestwick serves dinner all afternoon. Clyde had Gammon Steak for £5.25, Eleanor had Sausage and Mash for £3.95; lemonade and ale for £14.33. They served large portions, I left more than half and it was very good. Clyde asked the waiter for a container for my meal. He said he'll have to look for one. He came out of the kitchen with a dinner plate and plastic wrap. He said keep the plate guess they don't usually have people asking for a doggie bag. It was so good, I didn't want mine to go to waste. We'll leave it with Jim and Viv, someone will have it for lunch. On the road home at 5:15pm along with light rain.

Jim & Viv welcomed us home at 6pm. Clyde read the paper and was dreaming by 7:30pm. I worked on the map, plotting where tomorrow's castle assignments would take us. The map we bought at the end of our 98 trip has more information on it than my favorite old map that fell apart. The lights were out at 9:30pm, still raining.

Sunday, 21 March

It stormed all night. By 7am it was quiet with patches of blue skies along with the gray skies. A family from New Jersey stayed the night at our B&B. They fly home tomorrow (Monday). The lady of the family hadn't been home for 30 years, her mother had lived here. Their son took ill at the beginning of their two week holiday. He developed a severe ear infection that kept him bedridden for several days. They stayed in a Timeshare resort the week he was ill, at least they could stay in one bed for a week while he recovered. They didn't tell us but Jim & Viv said the Mr.'s wallet had been stolen, they didn't seem to like Scotland. It was unfortunate they had these difficulties.

On the road to the Auchenmead Farm while it isn't raining. James Brown Archibald came to the door of the farmhouse to greet Clyde. James took us on a tour of the farm and told us its history. Naming children in Scotland followed the tradition of the first son takes the name of his paternal grandfather. The

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second son takes the name of his maternal grandfather. James was named after his paternal grandfather. The farmhouse dates from 1778 to the present structure. It is a single level white building. The additions were made in this century. A steam train ran through the area by the farm until the 1950s (photo of the bridge). The tracks ran under the old bridge. The train picked up milk from the dairy farmers and delivered the milk to Glasgow.

James's cousins were working on the farm with him. The young men were washing the barn where the cows were milked. James can trace his family back 130 years. Robert Dunsmore gave us this assignment. Robert visited the farm approximately 5 years ago, James still had his business card. This was a fun assignment, nice man.

The next stop for a castle and potty break is the Eglinton Country Park. Beautiful grounds, the daffodils are in bud, no flowers yet. Eglinton was a huge 18th century castellated mansion that was built on the site of a 16th century stronghold of the Montgomery Earls of Eglinton. The property passed by marriage along with Ardrossan, from the Eglintons to the Montgomery family in the 14th century who were made Earls of Eglinton in 1508. The family long feuded with the Cunningham Earls of Glencairn. The castle was burnt in 1528 by the Cunninghams in retaliation for the sacking of Kerelaw Castle. Hugh Montgomery, 4th Earl, was murdered near the bridge of Annick by the Cunninghams of Colbeith and of Robertland and other family members. The Montgomerys killed every Cunningham they could find and cut Cunningham of Clonbeith to pieces.

It was at the new castle that the Eglinton Tournament was held in 1839, a medieval tournament that attracted thousands of visitors. The house was abandoned when the family ran out of money building a harbor at Ardrossan. The roof was removed in 1925 to be used for target practice and the shell of the house was partly demolished in 1973. All that survives is a single corner tower and some low walls. The day is warming, clear blue skies and we don't need to wear our coats!

On to Kilmarnock, we drove around for a hour looking for a sign to the Dean Castle. How could we have got so lost is beyond me, we've been to the Dean before. What a difference this castle looks in the sun, it was worth the frustration in finding it. Dean Castle consists of a 14th century keep of three stories. A 15th century palace block, with a square projecting tower, is joined by a three story house of the late 17th century. In the basement of the keep are the kitchen and a wine cellar. The main entrance was originally at the first floor level by an external stair. The tick walls by this entrance contains a small guardroom with a trap door leading to a prison and a small stair descending to the wine cellar. The second floor is occupied by an upper hall and chapel.

The lands were originally held by the Lockharts, then the Soulis family, who had a castle nearby. By the beginning of the 14th century it was held by the Balliols, then the lands were given to the Boyds by Robert the Bruce after the Balliols were forfeited. The castle was besieged by the English in the Wars of Independence. Robert Boyd became Guardian of James III during his minority and practically ruled Scotland from 1466-9. He later had to flee to Denmark and his brother was executed for treason. William, 10th Lord Boyd, was created earl of Kilmarnock in 1661.

The 4th Earl was a Colonel in Prince Charlie's guard during the Rising of 1745. He was captured after Culloden and was beheaded. The lands were forfeited but the 5th Earl recovered the estates in 1748. In 1758 the 15th Earl of Errol took the name of Hay. Dean was sold first to the Cunningham Earl of

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Glencairn then to the Scotts of Balcomie. In 1735 a fire gutted the hall-block and most of the castle was abandoned. It passed to Lord Howard de Walden in 1828. It was restored in 1905 using material from Balcomie Castle and was donated by Lord Howard to Kilmarnock in 1975.

The next assignment is the Caprington Castle, the gatehouse was just off the A759. A sign indicated it is a private road leading to the lived in castle, huge! Looked for someone to ask if we could take photos of the outside of the castle, couldn't find any one. Caprington consists of a 15th century or earlier keep with a small stair-wing and a substantial later wing which are encased in a castellated mansion of about 1829 with a large tower over the entrance. The property was owned by the Wallaces of Sundrum, descended from William Wallace, from 1385 but it passed by marriage to the Cunninghams. The Cunninghams were baronets of Nova Scotia from 1669 to 1829. Beautiful castle!

Heading south on the A77 to Stranraer to Castle Kennedy. This part of the A77 is like Highway 1 on the California coast, a curvy two lane road with waves splashing on the rocks, it really is a nice day. The map showed a castle tower ruin on a hill above the A77, we found a single track road in the village leading up to the Carleton Castle. The tower is part of a ranch, the cows were feeding in the pen in front of the ruins. Carleton Castle is a ruined rectangular 15th century keep with a destroyed corner that has a small courtyard. The basement probably contained the kitchen and the hall. The property belonged to the Cathcart family. The castle is reported to have screaming ghosts. Evidently Sir John Cathcart married several times. When he killed one wife he married again. His last wife, May Kennedy of Culzean figured out his plan and killed him. His ghost is said to haunt the building.

On the road again, for photos of the lighthouse at Cairnryan on Loch Ryan. Ferries leave from here and from Stranraer to Belfast Ireland, 1 hour 30 minute passage and to Larne Ireland, two hours 15 minutes.

We arrived at Castle Kennedy at 325pm to find the gardens will open in April. The gateman said we could drive to the car park at the entrance to the Gardens to see the White Loch and the current home, Lochinch and the Castle Kennedy ruins. We drove to the end of the lane to find the gate to the Gardens closed and locked. Then I saw a path into the gardens that went around the locked gates. I could then walk to the castle ruins without climbing any fences, great! Castle Kennedy was a large four story castle with ivy growing up the walls. Castle Kennedy is the ruin of a 17th century E-plan tower house that was originally on an island in a loch. It consisted of a main block of four stories and an attic; two square wings of five stories and two square towers, in the re-entrant angles, of seven stories, one containing the main turnpike stair. Three-story wings were later added.

The walls are pierced with large evenly spaced windows and shot-holes. The main entrance leads to a vaulted passage running through the basement. There is a large vaulted kitchen and the basement rooms in the square wings are vaulted. It was a property of the Kennedys from 1482. The existing castle was started in 1607 by John Kennedy, 5th Earl of Cassillis and replaced an older stronghold. In 1677, the property passed to the Dalrymples of Stair. A fire gutted the castle in 1716, it was never restored. The modern Lochinch Castle is .5 miles to the north. Culzean Castle was the family seat of the Kennedy's from the 1770s until the 1940s, when the Marquis of Ailsa returned to the Cassillis House in Cassillis, Ayrshire.

I found another path through the woods to Loch White to get a closer view of Lochinch, it was a beautiful mansion. Hope the long shots I took can be enlarged enough to see its beauty.

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First fill up on this trip, the price of gasoline increased since we were last here, more than \$5 a gallon. We went 265.7 miles on this tank, filled the tank at the Port Rodie BP Station (not much open in Stranraer on Sundays), it took 21.10 liters to fill the tank @ 69.9p/liter for £24.79. The Stranraer Castle in Stranraer is now a museum that tells the history of the building that was later the town jail in the 18th & 19th centuries. It is a 16th century L-plan tower house of three stories that was much altered. The main hall was on the first floor. It was probably built by Adair of Kilhilt about 1511 then passed to the Kennedys of Chappel, then to the Dalrymples of Stair. We'll find this castle on our next visit here.

We'll drive for awhile then find a place for dinner. The Knockdolian Castle was high on the hill above the town of Ballantrae, there was a WWI memorial below the castle surrounded by a hill of daffodils in full bloom. Knockdolian is a well preserved 16th century tower house that had four stories. The walls were pierced by small windows, gunloops and shot-holes. There had been an adjoining courtyard. The entrance leads into the vaulted basement that contained two cellars and the turnpike stair that climbs to all the floors. The hall, on the first floor, has a large fireplace. It was a property of the Graham family, then passed to the MacCubbins, who made extensive repairs to the castle in the mid 17th century. Nearby is the Knockdolian House, a large mansion built about 1842 for the MacConnells.

What we thought was the Knockdolian Castle turned out to be the Ardstinchar Castle. Photo prints of the Knockdolian were later sent to a potential customer related to the MacCubbins. He indicated the photos weren't the Knockdolian but the Kennedy Castle in Ardstinchar. The maps didn't list the village or Ardstinchar Castle. The castle book indicated the Ardstinchar Castle is located just east of Ballantrae, north of junction A77 with B7044 and north of the River Stinchar.

Little survives of the Ardstinchar Castle, except one side of a 15th century keep and foundations of a hall and other ranges. They stood within a courtyard which had square corner towers. It was built by the Kennedys about 1450. Mary, Queen of Scots, visited here in 1563. In 1601 Gilbert Kennedy, 16th baron of Bargany and Ardstinchar, was slain by his kinsman the Kennedy Earl of Cassillis over a claim to the lands of Crossraguel Abbey.

The Knockdolian is located 3 miles NE of Ballantrae, east of the B7044 and at the junction of A765, just west of the River Stinchar.

Dinner tonight will be at the Royal Hotel in Ballantrae, E had pork curry £4.50, C had haddock/chips for £4.15. This is a two Guinness night plus le monade came to £13.15, very good dinner. Back on the road at 550pm, we should see a sunset tonight! There was a lot of traffic heading north. The beautiful day motivated many people to travel today. We cut inland on a B road to Maybole to avoid the traffic. We arrived home at 730pm, the old folks were out late tonight!

Monday 22 March

On the road at 950am to overcast skies. Jim said there is an 100% chance of rain this afternoon. I asked him if he would join us for a cup of tea, he responded 'can't I have work to do and so do you'! No rest for the wicked. We found a ruin near the golf course in Kilbirnie, it is the Castle Place. Clyde asked the farmer living near the ruins if I could cross through his property for closer photos. He said fine, I went through two gates to get closer to the ivy covered castle. I saw a guard dog that I was happy to see was

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tied to his dog house, he looked mean. It is raining again, what a difference 24 hours makes from the beautiful day we had on Sunday.

We're off to Largs and the Kelburn Country Park. Kelburn is the current home of the Earl of Glasgow. It was a beautiful park, a few rhodendrum blossoms were left on the trees and the daffies were in full bloom. There were several large trees on the creek going to the Kelburn Castle that were blown over by the winds from the winter storms. Kelburn is a tall 16th century tower house with a large mansion added to it. The Z-plan tower house may date from the 13th century but is dated 1581. It was extended in 1700 and again in 1879. The original entrance is now a window. The basement was vaulted and contained the old kitchen. The Boyles held the lands of Kelburn from the 13th century. John Boyle of Kelburn was a supporter of James III and was killed at the Battle of Sauchieburn in 1488. The Boyles were made Earls of Glasgow in Viscounts Kelburn in 1703 for helping persuade reluctant Jacobites to sign the Act of Union. The Boyles still occupy the castle, making Kelburn the oldest house continuously occupied by the same family.

We'll take a ferry from Gourock to Dunoon on the Cowal Peninsula for the Toward Castle assignment. It costs £18 for a round trip for two passengers and car. We drove to the south end of Cowal to the Toward Lighthouse. There were many beautiful grand homes along the coast road. The Toward Castle entry gate was open. A man working in the area came to the window. Clyde asked him about the Lamont and Toward Castles. This is it he responded, are you looking for your heritage? I replied, yes, he said aye, there are not many of us left!

This area belonged to the Lamont Clan. He said the castle ruin you saw on the road before turning into the estate gate is the early castle of the Lamonts. This castle was called the Toward Castle, after it's ruin the new Toward Castle was built. The castle ruins are also known as the Lamont Castle. He said it is a short walk through the Cypress Trees to the ruins. Castle Toward is a large mansion house which is now a conservatory that is opened to the public. We thanked him for all the information and drove down the lane. Castle Toward was nice, big beautiful gardens and daffies starting to bloom. We sat in the car for awhile hoping the rain would stop. No luck, after eating our bananas and apples I went inside the castle for more information. There wasn't anyone at the entrance to the castle, I walked down the hall and found the toilet, might as well while I'm here. I continued walking through the main hall. I could hear kids talking and eating in one room. The far room had several bags, perhaps the kids would be camping here for the upcoming Easter Holiday.

Castle Toward is one of three educational heritage centers in Scotland. Achnamara near Lochgilphead and Ardentinnny near Dunoon were the other two. These centers were subsidized by the Strathclyde Regional Council for children's education. All three outdoor centers were to be closed until the Glasgow City Council, East Renfrewshire and Argyll and Bute Council along with the principal of Castle Toward formed a trust that saved the centers. Today, the Actual Reality Scotland Company for Learning and Leadership employees 38 full time employees that provide art courses, orienteering, sailing, kayaking, web design and many other courses. Specific group development courses for adults are also available.

With my trusty umbrella and camera under my coat I walked through the Cypress trees and came upon a walled garden with a large built in pond in front of it. I took photos of the pond, the raindrops were quite visible in the water. I walked around the wall to find a green house at the other end of the enclosure. Around the next corner was an older gated piece of a wall. This must be the old castle, but it was strange

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not to see any ruins of the tower. I hurried back to the warm car and took off my wet coat. I hoped to see the same young man to verify the enclosed garden belonged to the Lamonts.

We came upon him again, he replied no, the castle ruins are further down the dirt road. He said we might be better off leaving the estate and walking into an open gate closer to the ruins. Back on came the hat and wet coat to tromp through the wet grass and mud to the ruins. The castle was about 400 yards from the gate. It was slippery, sure hope these photos come out! I walked up the hill above the tower to find a huge fallen tree that just missed falling on the remains of the entrance to the castle. I took several photos inside (minimal walls were left) and shots from the other side that had daffies and another huge fallen tree. Back to the car and got a dry pair of socks out of the trunk and took off the now wetter coat.

The Toward Castle consists of a ruined 15th century keep, one wall standing to the height of the parapet and a 16th century courtyard with a decorated arched gateway. The basement of the keep was vaulted as was the first floor hall. The stair, in the thickness of the walls led to the first floor and the main entrance was at the first floor level. The courtyard contained a range of buildings housing a hall, kitchen, gatehouse and bake house. It was the property of the Lamonts who held lands in Cowal from 1200 or earlier. Mary, Queen of Scots, visited in 1563. The Lamonts were Royalists and in 1646 the Campbells captured, looted and burnt the castle. Although the Campbells had promised the Lamonts they could go free, they massacred and mistreated all Lamonts they found. They took many of the captives back to Dunoon where they hanged 36 from one tree. Many Lamonts changed their name to Black after the slaughter. In the 1820s, a new mansion, Castle Toward, was built nearby and is now a residential school. The old castle stands within the grounds, it was excavated and consolidated in 1970.

We drove back to Doonon hoping to catch the 1450pm ferry to Garnock. I'm glad I packed my whisky flask, did it every taste good and warmed me up. We were the last car on the 1450pm ferry, it looks a bit brighter now, but still raining. We'll go by the Finlaystone House, to see if we can get shots of this assignment. The Finlaystone, mostly dates from the 18th & 19th centuries, incorporates a 15th century castle. The house was remodeled between 1898 and 1903. The castle was a property of the Cunningham Earls of Glencairn. The 5th Earl had John Knox preach here in 1556 and fought against Mary, Queen of Scots, at the Battle of Carberry Hill in 1567. The 9th Earl led a rising for Charles II in 1654 but the rebellion was a failure, although after the Restoration he was made Chancellor of Scotland. Robert Burns, a friend with the then Earl, also visited the house. It later passed to the McMillans and the visitor center has a Clan MacMillan exhibits.

We will go directly back to Jim & Vivs, Clyde isn't feeling well. We had dinner in Lochwinnoch at the same place we ate on the last night of our 98 trip. I had sausage/onion pie, C had gammon steak; pints of lemonade/Murphys, £ 15.50. We'll have an early quit tonight, we're home at 515pm.

Tuesday 23 March

After giving Jim & Viv big hugs, we were on the road at 915am. Clyde had eggs, sausage, and beans; E had haggis, egg and ham, great selection. We consider Jim & Viv friends, we enjoy being with them. Viv called Kathy at the Thistle Doo near Oban this morning. I got on the phone and said good morning Kathy, do you know who this is. She said this is Eleanor and was glad to hear we were back in Scotland. How she can remember all the voices from the phone calls she receives is beyond me. We'll stay with Kathy & Jimmy three nights. I realized I had forgotten copies of the journals from previous trips which have the

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phone numbers of our favorite B&Bs. We found the phone numbers of Mrs. Munro and the Playfairs from the tourist brochures from their areas. That should do us for most of our lodging.

It is sprinkling now, we found a Bank of Scotland in Johnstone and we'll look for the Johnstone Castle while we're here. Next stop will then be to Elderslie where William Wallace was born, hope the skies brighten. The exchange rate is less for the dollar, \$500 bought £296. The Johnstone Castle is in good shape, a large portion of the tower is in tact. Photos of the Wallace Monument and what looks like a foundation of an old house. The monument was right by the filling station, 181 miles on this tank, @ 65.9/liter for £15.15.

We were looking for the Dunglass, Kilpatrick and Porterfield Castles. The Kilpatrick and Porterfield Castles weren't on any of my maps. We stopped in Old Kilpatrick and asked at the Post Office if there was an old castle, no one knew of one. The tourist information center in Dumbarton couldn't find those two either. The next assignment was the Dunglass Castle on the Firth of Clyde near the Dumbarton Castle, 60p toll for the Erskine Bridge. The Dunglass was on the map, however, it didn't show the way to get there. We came upon a security guard station that should be where the castle was on the map. Clyde asked if I could cross the closed arm and walk closer to the Dunglass which was right in front of us. I would have been satisfied with the shot from the guard shack except there was a box car right in front of the castle and I couldn't shoot around it.

Russell (security guard) took photos using the Olympus Camera. The Dunglass was located at a site of an old refinery which had been closed many years ago but wasn't clean. There was NO ACCESS from the security guard house. No matter what I said Russell was firm, no entrance and no access past the guard rail. I asked him if he would take my camera and take close up photos or escort me closer to the castle. He said no escorts and there is no one to call that can grant us access. He asked if my camera has a batter, I said yes it was an automatic. He responded then no he couldn't use my camera as there was fuel still in the area and a battery could cause an ignition. I remembered the manual Olympus and asked him if that would work. He smiled and said yes. I showed Russell how it worked and off he went up to the castle for close up shoots. He was gone for over five minutes and took 7 photos for us. I took a photo of him and thanked him. I added, we guarded the entrance to the site for him while he was gone and no one tried to trespass. This sure was nice of him.

The ruins of the 14th century castle of Dunglass contains a wall with a sea-gate and a ruined range with turrets. In the 16th century, a turreted house was built within the walls of the old castle and this was extended and remodeled in the 19th century. The property belonged to the Colquhouns. Sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss built the 16th century house. He was defeated in a skirmish by the MacFarlanes of Arrochar and being pursued by them, Colquhoun fled to Bannachra Castle. A treacherous servant pointed him out to the MacFarlanes at a window and a skilled bowmen killed Colquhoun. The castle passed to the Edmonstones in 1738 and became a ruin soon afterward. In 1783 it was partly demolished to build a new quay (Firth of Clyde). In 1812 Buchanan of Auchentorlie bought the castle, extended and remodeled it. It was surrounded by an Esso Oil Terminal, now gone.

We'll stop at the nearby Dumbarton Castle for long shots of the castle hill. Of course, it's raining now, need an umbrella. Little remains of Dumbarton Castle, mostly consisting of a 18th & 19th century fortifications, except the 14th century entrance. Dumbarton means 'fortress of the Britons', it was first mentioned around 450 as the stronghold of Alcluith of the kings of Strathclyde. In 756 it was captured by

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Picts and Northumbrians and in 870 was besieged by Irish raiders who captured the rock after four months of fighting, starving the garrison into surrender. Owen the Bald, the last King of Strathclyde, died at the Battle of Carham in 1018 and Strathclyde was absorbed into the kingdom of Scots.

Dumbarton became a royal castle and was a formidable fortress. In 1333, the young King David II and his queen Joan were sheltered in the castle during fighting with the English. In 1489 James IV tried to siege Dumbarton twice to oust the Earl of Lennox, the second time successfully and then used it as a base to destroy the Lord of the Isles. The castle was badly damaged through the centuries, improvements were made starting in 1675 and throughout the middle of the 18th century. Further renovations were made to develop the castle for coastal defense during the 1790s. Nothing remains of the medieval castle except the 14th century portcullis arch.

Next assignment is in Drymen for the Old Buchanan Arms Hotel and Auchmar. We stopped at the Library in Drymen, we stopped for information here on the last trip. We bought books on the Buchanans, Old Drymen and the Buchanan Castle. The Buchanan Auld House (also called Buchanan Place) was mostly destroyed by fire in 1852. The Buchanan Castle was built after the fire. The book had photographs of how nice the castle was, fine art and tapestry collections. The Buchanan Castle is a huge castellated L-plan tower house ruin. The ruin is crowned with the remains of many turrets, bartizans and towers. The main block of two stories and an attic has towers at either end and a three story turreted entrance block. The old castle was the seat of the Buchanans but in 1682 was sold to the Grahams. It was burnt in 1850 and a new house built in 1854, designed by William Burn. Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, was imprisoned here after flying to Scotland. There was an earlier castle, Buchanan Pele, to the south of the present building, the site of the golf course.

A man at the Gold Club Restaurant (part of the Auld House) took us into the dining room that had been the chapel in the Auld House. Graham is the Duke of Montrose, he bought the Buchanan Castle and lived there for many years. Auchmar is the current home of the Duke of Montrose (Graham). We found Auchmar on the NE side of Drymen, a large estate/farm. Sprinkling and it is 230pm already.

The next assignments are the Bannachra and Rossdhu Estates. We found Bannachra without any problems. Clyde looked for someone to ask if it was OK to take photos, but it didn't look like anyone was home. What a beautiful view of the hills from the house. In the photo across the garden it looks like a portion of a ruined wall, perhaps the Bannachra Castle. Bannachra is a ruined 16th century tower house of three stories with gables and shot-holes under the windows. The lands belonged to the Galbraiths but passed to the Colquhouns who built the tower in 1512. Sir Humphrey Colquhoun was murdered here by the MacFarlanes in 1592, illuminated and betrayed by a servant. There was a battle between the Colquhouns and the MacGregors at Glen Fruin in 1602, the MacGregors won.

The Rossdhu is now a private and exclusive golf club that does not allow visitors. The guard said to protect the privacy of their members visitors are not allowed access unless accompanied by a member. The guard at the entrance to the club said appointments can be made ahead of time with the owner if your name is Colquhoun (Calhoun). He gave us a brochure and sent us on our way. We'll have to find someone who belongs to this club and write a letter to the owner before the next trip. The photos in the brochure of the mansion are nice.

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The castle ruins of the Clan MacFarlane are on the north end of Loch Lomand. Their castle at Inveruglas was destroyed by Cromwell and another castle was built on Eilean I Vow (Gaelic is Eilean a'Bho - island of the cow') where the ruins are reported to be visible. We found the Eilean I Vow and looking through the gray fog and rain at the small isle we couldn't see any ruins among the trees. The Eilean Vhow Castle is a ruined 16th century Z-plan tower house. The basement was vaulted but little remains above this level. James VI visited the castle and the castle was inhabited in the 18th century but had been abandoned by the early 19th century. Thereafter, a hermit lived in the vault, which is now known as the 'Hermit's Cave'.

I asked a young lad at a hotel further north on Loch Lomand, close to the isle if that was the island and was there a castle there. He said there's no castle, only a dungeon or something and there is no access to the isle. Perhaps that's all that remains of the castle. We drove back to the first isle where the Inveruglas Castle was reported to have been. A piece of a wall could barely be made out from the shore. The 11th chief of MacFarlane was killed at the Battle of Flodden in 1513. Duncan, the 13th chief was killed at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547. The clan fought against Mary, Queen of Scots, at the Battle of Langside and were part of the Marquis of Montrose's army that defeated the Campbell Marquis of Argyll at the Battle of Inverlochy in 1645. The castle was burnt by Cromwell's men in the 1650s. It was raining and quite dark, the photo will most likely be dark, we'll see.

The Colquhouns share a common ancestry with the Clan Lennox, their castle is at Rossdhu (Gaelic: 'black wooded promontory'). In the grounds of the present Georgian House are the remains of a 12th century castle and an 15th century deer park meadow enclosed by a ditch and bank and an 16th century square keep. The small island of Eilean Rossdhu has remains of an earlier castle. All this now belongs to the private golf club. The 16th century tower house was inhabited until 1770. James Colquhoun led his clan to defeat in a battle with the MacGregors in Glen Fruin in 1602. The tower was mostly demolished to provide materials for the nearby Rossdhu House, which was completed in 1774.

We're in Argyll now. With the exceptions of Glencoe and Glenfinnan, all properties in this area are accessible from the seas, which significantly influenced history. At the height of their power, the lords of the Isles ruled most of this region and it might well be described as the Lordships. Their preferred method of travel by sea was more suitable for getting around the area. The Arduaine Garden is a 20 acres showcase rhododendrons, azaleas and other gardens for a year round attraction that shouldn't be missed. The Tighnabraich Viewpoint in the cowl peninsula offers a view of yachts in full sail as they make their way through Kyles of Bute passage.

We arrived at the Thistle Doo at 530pm. The pub close to their B&B that we enjoyed so much on the last trip was closed. They don't serve dinner during the winter. We'll go back to Taynait to the hotel for dinner. The Hotel on Loch Awe serves dinner starting at 730pm, too late for us, we're so tired we'll probably be in bed by then. Clyde had Gammon £5.95 and I had the Thai Chicken £6.95, Tartan Special/lemonade, great meal for £20 including tip. Jimmy had a nice fire for us after we came back from dinner. I went to the sitting room in my gown since no one else was there. Kathy had a tray of whisky for us, a nice treat that will be sure to warm us. It was nice reading the paper and working on the maps by the warm fire, made it up until 9pm, not bad.

Wednesday, 24 March

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Changeable weather is forecast for today, at least we'll have some clear spells along with showers. A nice young couple from London are staying with Kathy. They are getting married at the Ardanaiseg Hotel in May and are making the final arrangements this week. What a job it must be to organize a wedding in Taynuit from London. Evidently, 70 guests are coming, most are from England. They hired a coach to pick up the guests at the Glasgow Airport and to transport the guests to this area. They planned a celeidh after the ceremony in the village and are arranging for a generator today to be brought there for the power for lights and music. How organized, they will fly to Las Vegas for their honeymoon!

On the road at 930am, to Oban to fill the tank then to the passenger ferry that crosses from the mainland to the Isle of Kerrera for the Gylen Castle assignment. We drove 187 miles on this tank, @ 69.9p/liter, took 25.18 liters for £17.60. Jimmy told us he knows the operator of the passenger ferry going to Kerrera, they have been friends for years. We found Duncan and the passenger ferry. One person got off the boat and four got on to the small boat. We asked Duncan if he would take us to the south end of the isle for photos of the Gylen. He said not today it is too windy, but call (tele 563665) tomorrow morning and well try then. Otherwise it is a 1.5 hour walk to the castle and it is raining now. We don't have time for the hike to the castle and it is just too wet. Duncan said to tell Jimmy hello.

We're on plan B for Wednesday, we'll drive down the A816 to the Craigenish Castle then to Kilmartin, it is now 1045am. Clyde found the remains of the Fincharn Castle ruins on the east shore of Loch Awe. We drove by it once but couldn't see it from that direction. It was quite overgrown with trees. I considered hiking through the fields for a closer shot but the rains started again, the fields were already quite wet. Fincharn Castle is a strong but ruined 16th century tower house and courtyard. An earlier castle here was held by the MacDougalls for the English in 1308. It was a property of the Scrymgeours from 1370 until 1688. One of the family, John Scrimgeour of Glassery, was killed at the battle of Flodden in 1513. The castle later returned to the MacDougalls.

On to Kilmartin to find the Kilmartin Castle, didn't know there was a castle in Kilmartin when we were here on the last trip. The Kilmartin Castle was a small ruined 16th century Z-plan tower house. It consisted of a main block of three stories with projecting round towers at opposite corners. A small stair-tower stands against one side of the main block. The walls are pierced by shot-holes and the windows still have iron yetts. The entrance leads to the vaulted basement which contains three chambers. One is the kitchen, linked by a passage; a turnpike stair climbed to all floors in one of the round towers; the hall, with a large fireplace, was on the first floor of the main block and had an adjoining private chamber. There were more private rooms above the hall. The castle was the residence of John Carswell, Parson of Kilmartin, who moved to Carnasserie Castle when made Bishop of the Isles. It later became a property of the Campbells and has been restored.

Found three cute Highland Coos in the field next to the road and we could see the Carnasserie Castle on the hill. It looks like it is being restored, scaffolding is all around the ruins. The Kilmartin Castle is located on a hill above the hotel. Break time, we'll have our fruit and candy while the rain shower passes, 120pm.

On to the Castle Minard, there were good signs to the Castle Minard B&B, thinking the B&B was close to the castle. However, the castle is the B&B now. It was raining when I got out of the car and I stood under the enclosed entrance to the castle while the shower passed. I thought about knocking at the door but it was dark and it didn't look like anyone was home. While I was enjoying the beautiful gardens and Loch Fynn, a woman asked if she could help me. I asked if I could wait here until the showers pass and if

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I could then take photos of the castle. She responded, yes of course, do come in and see the castle until the rain stops.

Mr. & Mrs. Gayre and their family have owned the castle for 25 years. After his father died they opened it as a B&B to help pay the bills. She showed me the huge rooms, most of the rooms had nice views. The rates were from £25 - £35ppn for the rooms. I mentioned that the sign on the road indicated there were no vacancies, she said they officially open tomorrow, 3/25. I told them the story of our assignment and they wondered who requested a photo of the Minard. After taking my photos we walked to the car so he could meet Clyde and to find who requested this castle. He gave me a brochure and I asked if he would like us to have the brochures available at our booth. They gave me 10 brochures and we'll distribute them for this nice couple. The family dog was a big beautiful animal, looked like a retriever or lab. The dog posed on the steps going to the castle while I took the photos, 145pm.

The Minard Castle is on a headland in Loch Fyne, the oldest part of the house was built by the Campbells in the 18th century. This was extended in the 19th century in a Tudoresque style by the addition of a new castellated front. The castle was owned for a time by Thomas Lloyd (1835 - 1905) whose memorial stands in Minard Village. For a number of years the castle operated as a hotel but was purchased by the Gayre Family as a private home in 1974. Mr. & Mrs. Gayre's father purchased the home, I met the present owners.

On to the Castle Lachlan, we first took photos of the MacLaughlan Clan castle ruins in our 96 trip, shot across Loch Fyne in gray skies. Thought we would get closer shots on a better day. Castle Lachlan is a ruined 15th century castle of enclosure, consisting of a wall surrounding ranges of later buildings including a kitchen and hall. The basements were vaulted and turnpike stair climbed to the upper floors. The MacLachlans came from Ireland where they had been kings of Ulster but settled around Loch Fyne by the 13th century, an earlier castle here was referred to in a charter of 1314. The family supported Bruce in the Wars of Independence and were sensibly on good terms with the Campbells. The clan were Jacobites and fought at Killiecrankie with Bonnie Dundee in 1689 and the Risings of 1715 & 1745. The chief of the MacLachlan was killed at Culloden and the castle was sacked and burnt by the Campbells although part may have been habitable until 1790.

The MacLachlans managed to keep their lands but the castle was not rebuilt and a new home, also called Castle Lachlan, was built nearby. It is still held by the same family. Two cars following us on the single track road were MacLaughlans and they were looking for the castle ruins and the home where the chief now lives. They knew that the current chief lives close by. We'll go by there next. We could see the Castle Lachlan (new) from the castle ruins. Clyde found the road going to the house, he knocked at the door to ask if we could take photos, no answer.

The next assignment is the Dunderave Castle, home of the MacNaughtons. The castle was on the shore of Loch Fynn. There was a beautiful gate with the shield of the family, but the gate was closed. We stopped on the way to the Lachlan Castle and thought we would telephone the family to see if we could take photos and hopefully the rain would stop by then. The rain did stop when we returned to the Dunderave. Clyde called the house using the call box in front of the castle gates. It worked, Clyde said we were from California and would like to take photos for Scottish friends back home, we'll only need 15 minutes. The gates opened and the lady of the house greeted us after we parked the car. She asked if our name was MacNaughton, Clyde responded no, but we have MacNaughton friends at home. She

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asked him if we would like to take photos of the inside, she was happy when he said thank you, no, just the outside.

Dunderave Castle is a 16th century L-plan tower house of four stories and an attic with a square tower, in the re-entrant angle and a round tower at one corner. Bartizans crown the corners and the walls are pierced by gunloops. A panel above the entrance is dated 1596. The entrance, at the foot of the stair-tower leads into a passage to the vaulted basement. The basement contains the kitchen with a wide arched fireplace, the wine-cellar with a small stair to the hall above and another cellar. The hall, on the first floor, has a turnpike stair in one corner which climbs to the chambers above. There was a private room next to the hall.

The property belonged to the MacNaughtons, who had moved here from Dubh Castle near Inveraray. Only a mound on the southern shore of Loch Dubh remains of the Dubh Castle. It is said to have been abandoned in the late 15th century because of plague. The last MacNaughton holder intended to wed the younger daughter of Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglas but found himself married to the wrong daughter. After fleeing to Ireland with his love, the younger daughter, Dunderave passed to the Campbells with a good deal less slaughter than common for them. By the early 19th century, the castle had been abandoned and roofless but it was restored and extended by Sir Robert Lorimer in 1911-12 for the Noble family. It is a beautiful castle on Loch Fyne.

The sun was out and the photos should come out nice. The tower of the castle had a covering on it, either work was being done on the tower or it was being protected from the winds. The tower faced south on to the loch and appeared to be newer than the side facing north. There were two modern art statues on the south side of the house. The entrance into a small courtyard seemed to be the oldest part of the castle. They had a grand view of the loch, it has turned out to be a fine day, we're lucky on this one.

Couldn't resist photos of the Inverary Castle, it was in full sun. We visited the castle during the October trip, wish Jean and Joan were with us again. The present castle was built starting in 1743. It is on the site of a 15th century castle which consisted of a keep of four stories and a garret. James V visited here in 1533 and Mary Queen of Scots was here in 1562. It was burnt in 1644 by the Marquis of Montrose and the castle was demolished as part of the 3rd Duke of Argyll's rebuilding of a new castle and town.

We'll stop at the Woolen Mill in Inverary and have an early dinner. The hotel didn't serve dinner until 6pm. The tea shop in the Woolen Mill was open, lentil soup, mince lamb pie, tuna sandwich and tea for supper tonight, £7.20. We finished the light supper at 430pm and the shops downstairs were just closing, winter hours are 930am - 430pm. Heading home for an early quit tonight. Clyde stopped for photos of the Kilchurn Castle at the usual place we take photos from the roadside. I read there was a trail leading to the castle, we'll ask Jimmy where it is. Jimmy told us last night that the Kilchurn is up for sale, good fixer upper with a great view of Loch Awe and lots of history. The 3/18/99 edition of the Oban Times, **Kilchurn Castle Under offer.** "One of Scotland's most famous landmarks could soon have a new owner. Estate agent MacArthur Stewart of Oban have confirmed receiving an offer for Loch Awe's Kilchurn Castle, a ruined 15th century keep which was added to in the 17th century. At this stage negotiations are still strictly confidential and all the company will say at present is that the castle is under offer."

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Home at 530pm, Jimmy lit a fire, I worked on the maps and enjoyed a wee dram of whisky. By 730pm I was ready for bed, Clyde was already snoring. The news is full of the bombings in Kosovo, hope it works.

Thursday, 25 March

Nice visit at breakfast with Claire and Keith. They accomplished their tasks in Oban yesterday, ordering flowers, rings and generators. They had a few more details to see to today then were leaving on Friday to go to Edinburgh then home to England. They are an interesting couple, they have been together going on seven years, they both work in the field of marketing, training and advertising. We exchanged Email addresses, hope we hear from them.

Jimmy talked with Duncan of the Kerrera Ferry, the ferry will take us to Kerrera at 1130am, hope it doesn't rain too much. We'll take photos of Dunstaffnage if the skies clear long enough, fill the tank then off to the Gylen Castle, 945am. The Dunstaffnage Castle was in the sun while we were there and we didn't need our coats! Dunstaffnage means 'Port of Seaweed'. The castle was open, first time we've been here when it was open. Our English Heritage membership provided us free entry to the castle. Dunstaffnage Castle consists of a massive 13th century curtain wall with round towers and an altered 16th century gatehouse. The wall is 60 feet high in places, crowned by a parapet and is pierced by arrow slits. Ranges of buildings within the walls contained a hall and kitchen. In 1725 a two story house was added.

A stronghold here was held by the kings of Dalriada in the 7th century and was one of the places that the Stone of Destiny was kept. The present castle was built by the MacDougalls. The castle was besieged and captured by Robert the Bruce in 1309 after the MacDougalls had been defeated at the Pass of Brander. Bruce made the castle a royal property with Campbells as keepers. In 1455 the 9th Earl of Douglas fled here to seek help from the Lord of the Isles after James II had destroyed the power of the Black Douglasses. Argyll burned the castle in 1685. Government troops occupied the castle during the Risings of 1715 & 1745 and Flora MacDonald was imprisoned here after helping Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Dunstaffnage is one of the major stone castles built in strategic position on the West coast of Scotland in the 13th century. At his time successive Kings of Scots were gradually extending their control over the western seaboard and islands, enlisting the help of the local lords and chieftains to control a wild and unruly population. The MacDougalls ruled Lorn, they were descendants of the great Norseman, Somerled, King of the Isles, and had in their time owned allegiance to Norway and to Scotland. It was either Duncan (died between 1237 and 1248) or his son Ewen (died before 1275) who built the castle. The degree of sophistication in its architecture suggests that royal builders may have been involved in its construction.

We filled the car at our favorite ESSO station in Oban. We drove 204 miles on this tank, took 26.53 liters @ 69.9p/liter for £18.55 plus candy and a newspaper. It is raining again. Duncan picked us up at 1145am, he said he could take us to the bay but the water was too rough to land. We said fine, let's go! The water got rougher and rougher as we approached the end of the Sound of Kerrera. When we reached the lighthouse he slowed down, too bumpy for the faster speeds. The sun was on the Gylen Castle when we arrived. Gylen is the remains of the MacDougall Tower Castle. Duncan said the brother of the MacDougall Chief had lived in Gylen. We could only stay in the bay about five minutes as the waves were high and rough. We took as many shots as possible, then we had to leave.

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Gylen or Gylem Castle is a 16th century L-plan tower house which consists of a square main block and a stair-tower. The main block rises to four stories while the wing is a story higher and crowned by a corbelled cap house. There was an adjoining courtyard. A vaulted passageway runs through the main block to the courtyard and a vaulted cellar is entered from the pend. The main entrance, in the re-entrant angle from the courtyard, leads to the foot of the main turnpike stair which climbs to all floors. The hall and kitchen are on the first floor. An oriel window projects at third floor level.

As mentioned, Gylen was a property of the MacDougalls, an earlier castle here was where Alexander II died during an expedition to recover the Western Isles in the mid 13th century. The existing castle, built by Duncan MacDougall, was completed in 1582 but was captured and burnt by a Covenanter army, led by General David Leslie, in 1647. The Brooch of Lorn, a brooch torn from Robert the Bruce's cloak was also stolen, and not returned by the Campbells of Inverawe until the 19th century. The castle was never restored.

Duncan took us to the east side of Kerrera to see a herd of wild goats, then to the mainland side to show us where Major MacDougall lives. We stopped at Kerrera and walked on the island for 10 - 15 minutes while Duncan did errands. There were two men to take back to the mainland. We were lucky, it would have been miserable in the rain for this venture. All in all, we were gone only an hour. We did get wet, the waves splashed us several times. Our coats and jeans were slightly wet, we'll dry in the car. The rain resumed approximately 10 minutes prior to returning to the mainland. Duncan charged us £ 16.50 for the trip, Clyde gave him £ 20. Duncan is nice, we said it was fun, he responded the waves were too rough for him!

We stopped in Oban for lunch of soup and sandwich for £ 7.35, the tea shop we usually eat at was closed probably for good. We bought shortbread cookies at the gift shop. Next stop is the Dunollie Castle, it looks like the castle will be in the sun for once. Clyde saw a road that looked like it went to the Dunnolie House. Duncan told us the MacDougall Chief lives in the Dunnolie House close to the castle ruins. Road work was being done on the shore road. Their vehicles blocked the entrance to the private road going to the Dunnolie House. The crew moved their trucks so we could get by. The castle ruins and the Dunnolie House were both in the sun and the daffies were in full bloom, 245pm.

The Dunollie Castle consists of a 13th century castle of enclosure and a 15th century keep of four stories. Ranges of buildings once stood in the courtyard but these are mostly ruined and overgrown. The keep had a vaulted basement. There was a lesser hall on the first floor and a main hall on the second floor, reached by two straight stairs. A turnpike stair led to the upper chambers. In 698 Dunollie, then a fortress of the kings of Dalriada, was captured and destroyed. The present castle was built by the MacDougalls in the 13th century, direct descendants of Somerled and one of the most powerful families in Scotland at that time. They were bitter enemies of Robert the Bruce. A MacDougall force defeated Bruce at Dalry, nearly killing him and wrenching a brooch from his cloak. The brooch became known as the Brooch of Lorn and was kept at the castle, then at Gylen. Bruce returned and ravaged MacDougall lands in 1309 after defeating them at the Pass of Brander.

In 1644 the castle was attacked by Argyll and in 1647 the castle was besieged by General David Leslie and an army of Covenanters. It was attacked again in 1715 when the MacDougalls were fighting for the Stewarts during the Jacobite Rising. The lands were forfeited but restored in 1745. The MacDougalls built nearby Dunollie House in 1746 and the castle was abandoned. The castle is still owned by the

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MacDougalls but in a dangerous condition. It can be reached from a layby on the Ganavan road but not from the drive to Dunollie House, which is not open to the public.

We'll head back toward the B&B after seeing a few castles on the north shore of Loch Awe. First stop was the Bridge of AWE, or what was left of the bridge. The majority of the center of the bridge was gone, it must have been blown up many centuries ago. Was I surprised when I later asked Kathy about the bridge. She said a major storm blew away the bridge only four years ago. I told her I like my assumption better, clan battles of centuries ago, oh well!

We're looking for Innis Chonnel Castle, there is a private road going to the small island. We found the road and drove to the end. Clyde knocked at the door of the house at the end of the road, no one was home. It looked like there had been a castle on the hill here. Parts of a garden wall were still standing. Another small isle was close by, we could see a standing piece of a wall that could have been the Fraoch Eilean, an old tower belonging to the Campbells. It is reported little remains of the courtyard and hall house of the strong 12th century castle. It was a property of the Chiefs of the MacNaughtons from 1267. It later passed to the Campbells. Fraoch means heather.

Innis Chonnel Castle was the original stronghold of the Campbells from the 11th century and was the seat of Mac Cailean Mor, who was killed at the Red Ford of Lorn in 1294. John MacDougall held it against Robert the Bruce in 1308. The Campbells were made Earls of Argyll in 1457. Donald, son of Angus, was the young heir to the Lordship of the Isles. He was imprisoned here after the Battle of Bloody Bay, off Mull, in 1484. He escaped but after invading Badenoch in 1503 was captured and imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle for 40 more years. The Campbells used Innis Chonnel as a prison after the Inverary Castle became their home.

After we had taken photos of the area, a woman came storming up to the car with her much friendlier dogs yelling at us, 'this is private'. We said we were sorry, we didn't see the sign. She turned around grumbling and saying she'll have to put a lock on that gate. She didn't even let us ask a question. We left to find a road to the next castle, the Kilchurn Castle. I read there was a path leading down to the castle, we thought it was reachable by boat only. We turned down a private road, two men were talking. One man came to the car and said 'go over the bridge, 50 meters to a black and white post. There is a car park and you can walk to the castle from there'. They were nicer, Clyde said he was going to ask directions to Edinburgh. They laughed and said that would be different!

We found the post (more white with a small dark band) and a gravel park for the cars. We crossed the train tracks and walked up to the castle. The door going into the ruins was locked, there was no other way to get in. Kilchurn was big and it looked really good when the sun came out. My boots were caked with mud and my socks were wet. There was a dirt road leading to the castle but many places were flooded and we walked through the grass, the high weeds helped.

Some say the Kilchurn Castle is the second most photographed castle in Scotland. It is a picturesque 15th century ruin. It consisted of a keep of four stories and a garret which was extended with ranges of buildings in the 16th century. The basement of the keep is vaulted and contained the kitchen. The hall, on the first floor had only one fireplace. The floors above are gone. The courtyard has round towers at the corners, which are pierced by shot-holes. The other ranges are late 17th century barrack blocks having two large kitchen fireplaces. The lands originally belonged to the MacGregors but were acquired by the

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Campbells of Glenorchy who built the castle. The castle was strengthened and improved by Black Duncan of the Seven Castles, Sir Duncan Campbell, at the end of the 16th century. The Campbells withstood a two day siege here in 1654 by General Middleton before he retreated from Monck's Cromwellian forces.

Sir John Campbell acquired the lands of the 6th Earl of Caithness by foreclosing on his vast debts and claimed the title of Earl. He led a bloody campaign in the north in 1680 and legend has it he slew so many Sinclairs that the Campbells crossed the Wick River without getting their feet wet. The song, 'The Campbells are Coming' was composed at this point in history. Sir John failed to hold the Earldom but was made Earl of Breadalbane instead. The Campbells inhabited the castle until 1740 when they moved to Balloch which is now called Taymouth. Kilchurn was garrisoned by Hanoverian troops in 1745. We made our way back to the car by 445pm to end an adventurous and rewarding photo day.

Katrina, Kathy/Jimmy's daughter, arrived today for the Easter Holiday. She is completing her first year of ballet school in London. She remembered us from our 97 trip. She found London to be everything and more than what she expected. I mentioned to Kathy when we left this morning for our adventure that it was my treat for a dram of whisky by the fire tonight, she smiled OK. Kathy worked the third shift at the local hospital and she has tonight off.

The family was having dinner when we got home. Katrina and Kathy both came to say hello to us in our room. Kathy said lets have the dram. Jimmy soon joined us and we sat in the kitchen and Kathy told us they would be heading north in the morning as her dad had taken a turn for the worse. At 830pm her other daughter phoned and said papa passed on. We finished the wee bit of whisky left in the bottle and talked until after 9pm and then to bed.

Friday, 26 March

Woke to a gray and overcast morning. We enjoyed a breakfast of kippers and talking with Keith and Clare. Keith had some good statements of philosophy that I told him I wished I could remember for my journal, he was funny. Kathy was doing fairly well considering the circumstances. We hugged everyone good by, invited them to California and wished them good weather for the May wedding. Great stay with our friends, £ 120 for the 3 nights, £ 20ppn.

On the road by 945am, we're heading north via the A828. We'll visit Clyde's favorite castle, the Stalker Castle, on to Fort William, the Eilean Donan Castle then on to Inverness. Clyde called Mrs. Munro last night at dinner and she has our room through Sunday. It looks a little brighter in the NE. The forecast for Fort William is sun/clouds. We haven't as yet seen Ben Nevis in all our trips as it has been raining or covered in fog or both. Photos of Loch Etive, the loch was smooth as glass and had nice reflections of the mountains.

Clyde found the road going through some homes and asked at one house if we could walk through their property to the pier in front of the Stalker. The lady of the house said we could go through, however, it was muddy. This is the closest we've got to the Stalker and to top the morning, the sun came out. We must have shot 20 or more frames each, the Stalker is haunting standing on the islet and nicely reflected in the water, 1110am.

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The tall and massive keep stands on a small island at the mouth of Loch Laich. It is rectangular in plan that is four stories high and has a garret. There are two entrances, the first at ground level, is defended by a machiollation at parapet level and leads to the vaulted basement which has a prison in one corner. A small mural stairway climbs to the first floor hall. The main entrance is reached by an external stone stair at first floor level and is protected by a machiollation. Private chambers occupied the stories above the hall. A small courtyard has a landing place.

Castle Stalker was built by Duncan Stewart of Appin, who made Chamberlain of the Isles for his part in helping James IV destroy the MacDonald Lord of the Isles. The assassination of Campbell of Cawdor in 1592 started a feud between the family and the Campbells. The Stewarts of Appin fought at the Battle of Inverlochy under the Marquis of Montrose, in 1645 against the Campbells. In 1620 the castle was sold to the Campbells but the Stewarts retrieved it after a long siege in 1685. A Stewart garrison surrendered to William and Mary's forces in 1690. In 1715 the clan fought for the Jacobites at Sheriffmuir during the Jacobite Rising. The 9th Chief did not support the 1745 Rising but the clan were led by Stewart of Ardshiel. The 9th Chief sold his estates in 1765. The castle was abandoned about 1780 but was restored from ruins in the 1960s.

The drive north was nice, stopped for photos of the Ardgolir Mountains across Loch Linnhe. Arrived at Fort William at 1145am and it is not raining! We couldn't find a place to park in town near the bank, we'll cash a check somewhere else. Time to replenish the candy and fruit, we've been to this Safeway before. Fort William is named after the ruinous fort which was built by General Monck for Cromwell during the 1650s, then reconstructed and renamed in 1690, during the reign of William of Orange. It was bombarded in the Spring of 1746 by Jacobites but could not be taken. It was garrisoned until 1866 when it was mostly demolished.

We drove past the Inverlochy Castle to find it is being restored. We first stopped at this castle in 97, at that time trees and vegetation was growing throughout the ruins and the walls were crumbling. The castle towers and the four corners of the castle were mostly restored now. One tower remains to be restored, it looks good. Inverlochy Castle was built to command a site of major strategic significance. Inverness commands one end of the Great Glen and Inverlochy the other. Both were the sites of important castles during the Middle Ages.

The significance of Inverlochy is witnessed by the three battles which have taken place outside its walls. The first was a naval engagement in 1297, the other two battles were on land in 1431 and 1645. In 1431 Donald Balloch and Alasdair Carrich led the MacDonalds to victory over an army of Stewarts, the Earl of Caithness being among those who were slain. In 1645, the Marquis Montrose led a force of Highlanders to victory over the Covenanters, led by his arch foe, the Campbell Earl of Argyll. The modern castle is nearby and is now a hotel.

Lordship of Lochaber was entrusted by the crown to the Comyns of Badenoch, one of the most important families of the new Anglo-Norman nobility. It was they who built Inverlochy probably towards the end of the 13th century. It has a rectangular courtyard with a round tower at each corner, one larger than the others. There were two entrances opposite each other with portcullises. The Comyns were destroyed by Robert the Bruce around 1308 and the castle was later held by the Gordons of Huntly.

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The top of Ben Nevis can almost be seen in its entirety, we couldn't see the snow line on the mountain on previous trips. It was a mammoth mountain, the tallest mountain in Scotland, 1245pm. Stopped for photos of the Ben Tee Mountain Forest reflected in a pond with daffies in bloom and then to Loch Lochy. We looked for the Invergarry Castle on previous trips and couldn't find it, we'll try one more time. I thought the Invergarry was a hotel but it is a four story tower ruins, crumbling away. The family lives next door amid the old castle walls on Loch Lochy. There is a hotel nearby, the Glengarry Castle Hotel. Clyde took photos of the Castle/Hotel on the shores of Loch Oich which is between Loch Ness and Loch Lochy.

The Invergarry Castle was the clan seat of the MacDonells of Glengarry. Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed here after the Battle of Culloden. Invergarry is a large 17th century L-plan tower house which consisted of a main block of five stories with a sixth story round stair-tower. The walls are pierced by shot-holes. The fortress stands on the 'Rock of the Raven', the slogan of the family. The basement does not appear to have been vaulted. A wide scale-and-platt stair climbed to the first floor in the wing while the upper floors were reached by a stair-tower and a round stair-tower.

The castle was built by the MacDonalds, or Clan Ranald, of Glengarry after raids by the MacKenzies in 1602. It was burnt in 1654 by forces of General Monck during Cromwell's occupation of Scotland. In 1688 Alastair MacDonald of Glengarry fortified it for James VII but eventually submitted to the government of William and Mary in 1692. It was retaken by Alasdair Dubh of Glengarry in 1715 but recaptured by Hanoverian forces in 1716. The castle was back in the hands of the MacDonalds by 1731. After the 1745 Rising it was burnt by the 'Butcher' Duke of Cumberland. A new mansion was built nearby, on the site of which is the Glengarry Castle Hotel.

Next stop was the beautiful Loch Garry and the snow capped Mealldubh Mountains. We arrived at the Eilean Donan at 245pm, it was overcast. The gift shop was open, however, a sign on the door said no toilets. There are now gates at the front of the bridge going to the castle. A guard station is there, the most photographed castle in Scotland is now quite commercial. The castle consists of a 13th century wall surrounding a courtyard. In one corner of the courtyard stands a strong 14th century keep of three stories and a gabled garret. Adjoining ranges of outbuildings and fortifications were added in later centuries. The main entrance is up a flight of stairs from the courtyard. The basement is barrel-vaulted and the hall is on the first floor. The private rooms are above the hall.

Alexander III gave the lands to Colin Fitzgerald, son of the Irish Earl of Desmond and Kildare, for his help in defeating King Haco and his Norsemen at the Battle of Largs in 1263. The family changed their name to Mackenzie and Eilean Donan became their main stronghold. Robert the Bruce was sheltered here in 1306. In 1331 Randolph, Earl of Moray, executed 50 men at the castle and 'decorated' it's walls with their heads. The castle was captured by the Earl of Huntly in 1504 and in 1509 the MacRaes became constables of the castle. In 1539 it was besieged by Donald Gorm MacDonald, a claimant to the Lordship of the Isles but he was killed. William Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Seaforth, had it garrisoned with Spanish troops during the 1719 Rising but three frigates battered it into submission by cannons and was blown up from within. It was completely rebuilt in the 20th century.

The Urquhart Castle stands on the shore of Loch Ness. It consisted of a 13th century castle of enclosure with a curtain wall and gatehouse. The courtyard enclosed ranges of buildings including a hall, a chapel and a 16th century tower house at one end. The lower stories of the gatehouse survive as well as parts of the curtain wall and traces of the ranges within the courtyard. Part of the tower house blew down in a

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storm, it had a vaulted basement and a hall on the first floor. The private chambers are on the floors above. The Picts had a fort here in the 6th century which St. Columba may have visited when he converted a Pictish chief Emchatu. The first castle was built by the Durwards in the mid 13th century and the large main courtyard was added in the late 13th and 14th centuries, probably by the Comyns. It was held in 1296 by forces of Edward I of England but after two attacks was taken by the Scots. The English recaptured the castle in 1303 after a long siege. In 1308 the Scots, led by Robert the Bruce, regained the castle.

The castle held for David II in 1333 against Edward Balliol and Edward III of England. It was captured in 1437 by the Earl of Ross but in 1476 was given to the Gordon Earl of Huntly. In 1509 James IV gave the castle to John Grant of Freuchie on condition that he strengthen the castle. The Grants built the tower house, gatehouse and the present courtyard walls. The MacDonalDs captured the castle in 1515 after the death of their enemy, James IV at the Battle of Flodden and in 1545 with their allies, the Camerons of Lochiel, devastated it and the surrounding area. In 1644 the castle was sacked by Covenanters. The castle held against the Jacobites in 1689 but was later demolished in 1691 to prevent them using it.

The castle had just closed prior to our arrival and the castle was in full sun, oh well. We took photos from the road and decided to have an early dinner at the Glen Café on Loch Ness. Dinner was good, lemon chicken, tuna sandwich, soup and ice cream bar, Sprite and a Tartan Ale for £13.21. The waitress said it has been sunny all day on Loch Ness. We arrived at Mrs. Munro's at 6pm, we chatted with her for 45 minutes. It was good to see her again. We'll have an early quit tonight, we're beat.

Saturday, 27 March

It is a beautiful and sunny day, cold but nice. Mrs. Munro's porridge was the best, she said she adds bran, great breakfast. On the road north at 915am, filled the tank @ 69.9/liter, took 34.39 liters for £24.04, 264 miles on this tank. First stop is in Dingwall for the Tulloch and Dingwall Castle assignments. We saw a tower on the hill over the town and walked there to find it was a memorial monument to Hector MacDonald (1907) along with the town cemetery. Back to town, we walked along the store fronts to find someone to ask where the castles were. What is left of the Dingwall Castle is on Castle Street, all that is left is a corner tower and pieces of the castle wall. A house close to a section of the wall was called Castle House.

William the Lyon built the first castle here in the late 12th century and the Earls of Ross rebuilt it in stone in the 14th or 15th century. James IV had a hall added after his visit in 1503 and 1507 Andro, Bishop of Caithness, improved the castle after it was assaulted by the MacDonalDs and the Mackenzie s. It was a derelict by 1625 and ruinous by the mid 18th century. The Castle, a two story house with crenellations was built in 1821 and is nearby.

On to the Tulloch Castle, which is now a hotel. The castle includes work from the 13th century and incorporates an altered keep, square in plan, with a round stair-tower at one corner. The parapet and corbelling of the keep are modern as is the caphouse, the windows have been enlarged. The walls are pierced by gunloops and are harled. The basement of the keep is vaulted and the hall, on the first floor, has the original fireplace. The first floor chambers have ornate plaster ceilings. Tulloch was a property of the Bains until 1760 when it passed to the Davidsons, who held it until the 20th century. The Davidsons of Tulloch, were the 18th century successors of the Bains of Tulloch. The Bains of Tulloch and the

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Dingwalls of Kildun were allies of the Clan Munro 'in their rare but sanguinary conflicts with their Mackenzie neighbours'. By 1900, Davidson of Tulloch could ride from coast to coast in Ross-shire without leaving his own ground.

The house was extended in 1891 and remodeled in 1919 by Sir Robert Lorimer. The building was used as a school before it became a hotel. Two cars were parked by the hotel, couldn't find anyone in the hotel. I went inside looking for a brochure of the hotel but couldn't find that either, 1110pm.

We're four miles from the village of Foulis. We have an assignment for the Fowlis Castle reported to be close to Perth. Since we're in the area we'll shoot the Foulis Castle just in case our customer means this castle. Foulis Castle belongs to the Munro Clan, this was the correct castle. It was a beautiful castle and farm, we'll have to research the history of this one, 1130am. Foulis is a white harled two story mansion that incorporates an earlier tower house of which some of the walling and gunloops survive. It was a property of the Munros. The Munros built a castle here in the 12th century. The Munros acquired the lands on agreement they should find a snowball in midsummer if requested to do so. One of the chiefs was killed at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547 while another, Robert Munro, known as the 'Black Baron' joined the army of Gustave Adolphus in the 30 Years War and was killed at Ulm in 1633. The castle was sacked and burnt in 1746 by Jacobites as the family fought against Bonnie Prince Charlie. The Munros held the property in the 20th century, it was restored and is still occupied.

Next assignment is the Balnagown Castle, noon. All the gates entering the castle were padlocked closed. Balnagown originally belonged to the Ross Clan, I heard the estate now belonged to Mohammed El Fayed, the father of Princess Diana's boyfriend who were both killed on 8/31/97. Clyde talked with a home owner on the north side of the castle, he confirmed it was his. The Fayed Family bought the estate some 20 years ago. The neighbor said there was extreme security and guard dogs everywhere.

Clyde got shots from the back and we found a place close to the front that we could see a fairly clear shot of the castle. Otherwise the castle was surrounded by trees. That's about all we can do for this assignment. The castle looks really nice. Fayed's neighbor said that everyone in this area worked for the Fayed Family, but he didn't. He was proud of that. The castle is a much-altered tower house which dates in part from the 14th century. The old part consists of a tall gabled block of four stories and a garret, with two slender towers at two corners. These towers and the battlements are later additions. Many changes and additions were made in the late 18th and early 19th centuries by James Gillespie Graham. Many of the windows have been enlarged, one gable is dated 1672.

The basement is vaulted and the interior of the castle is richly furnished. The hall on the first floor has a fine chimney piece of 1700. The castle was built by the Ross family about 1375. The 8th laird, Alexander, terrorized the neighboring properties and was imprisoned in Tantallon Castle. He died in 1592 but his son, George (also wicked) held John Ross in Balnagown Castle after seizing him in Edinburgh. George was also accused of murder and with aiding the fugitive Earl of Bothwell, the third husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. George's sister, Katherine, wife of Robert Munro of Foulis, was charged with being a witch. Her friends were burnt, however, Katherine escaped prosecution by getting her own people on the jury at her trial. The property remained with the Ross family until 1978. 'Black' Andrew Munro, a man of evil repute was executed by hanging him from a window in the castle in 1522.

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Next assignment is in Dornoch, for the Dornoch Cathedral and Castle. The Cathedral was open, went inside it was beautiful. The Dornoch Palace or Castle is a hotel now. It consists of an altered 14th century keep of five stories with a round 16th century stair-tower. The keep has two open rounds and has a gabled roof. Many of the windows have been enlarged but the walls are still pierced by shot-holes. Adjoining this is a four story 16th century wing with its own stair-tower. The castle has a courtyard and garden. It was extended and altered in the 19th century. The entrance was at the foot of the stair-tower. The basement is vaulted, the hall would have been on the first floor with the private chambers on the floors above.

Dornoch Palace was built by the Bishops of Caithness. It passed to the Gordon Earls of Sutherland after the Reformation. In 1567 George Sinclair, 4th Earl of Caithness, had the town and cathedral burnt. The castle held out for a month but eventually surrendered and the hostages were murdered. The castle was burnt and left a ruin until it was restored in the 19th century as a courthouse, jail and now hotel. I followed signs up the hill to the Birchfield House Hotel.

We then followed signs to the Skelbo Castle ruins on Loch Fleet. We were here in 97, but not this close to the ruins. Skelbo is a ruined 14th century keep and castle consisting of a rectangular block of two stories and a garret. A courtyard had a curtain wall and the basement was vaulted. It was a property of the Sutherlands of Skelbo. A castle here was captured by Robert the Bruce in 1308 during the Wars of Independence. This branch of the Sutherlands acquired the Lordship of Duffus in the 14th century. William Sutherland, Lord Duffus, was slain by the Gunns at Thurso in 1530. Alexander, his son, sacked and burnt the cathedral and town of Dornoch in 1567 and again in 1570. The family was forfeited for their part in the 1715 Rising. The property was acquired by the Gordon Earls of Sutherland. Old Skelbo House is a long two story house with a vaulted basement and dates from 1600. The basement contained a byre while the living chamber on the first floor was reached by a removable ladder.

On to the next assignment, the Skibo Castle. The present Skibo Castle is a massive 19th century mansion that was the summer home of Andrew Carnegie, it was a beautiful mansion, gardens and private golf course, gorgeous! The first castle on this site was a property of the Bishops of Caithness until 1565. The Mackays captured it in 1544 and it later passed to the Grays. The Marquis of Montrose was imprisoned here after being betrayed at Ardvreck Castle. Robert Gray was fined after his wife, Jean Seton, hit one of Montrose's guards with a leg of meat. The property passed to the Dowalls in 1776, then to the Dempsters of Dunnichen in 1786. The present mansion was built at the beginning of the 19th century for Andrew Carnegie but was remodeled for the Sutherland family in 1872.

Hopefully, we'll have time for a malt stop at the Glenmorangie Distillery. I bought a bottle of this whisky some time ago, it is nice! No luck, it is closed on weekends although it looked like a private tour was going on. A Castlecraig is noted on the map, since it is close by we'll try to find it. The tower ruins were located on the southern shore of the Cromarty Firth. It consists of a ruined 16th century tower house with one collapsed side. The four story tower has two entrances. Both entrances are guarded by gunloops, one is on the landward side and the other entrance is from the courtyard. The kitchen and large fireplace was in the basement, the hall was on the first floor with the private chambers above. A turnpike stair, in one corner, led to all floors. The castle was built by the Urquharts but was used as a residence of the Bishops of Ross. It was abandoned about 1640.

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The sun peaked through the douds just in time, the wind is picking up and it is getting cold, 330pm. Tonight the clocks are turned ahead one hour for Daylight Savings Time. Britain goes on Daylight Savings Time one week before the States. Mrs. Munro had a nice fire going for us when we arrived home, we chatted awhile and warmed our feet.

Sunday, 28 March

The sun is out in the SE, not so bright in the NW. We were going to Ullapool today but the forecast is rain for the early afternoon coming in from the west. We'll go south for the Loch Moy assignment, to Avimore then back to Inverness for the Brodie assignments. It is cold today, a good day for long underwear. On the road by 930am, not bad for losing an hour due to the time change.

We found the gate going into Moy Hall. Clyde knocked at the door of the Gatehouse, no answer. We drove into the estate and came upon a lady walking her dog. She looked surprised to see someone coming down her private road. Clyde told her who we are and that we're on requests from friends in California. She said you can take photos but do call ahead the next time as she would like to show us the museum and chat with us. She had an appointment now, otherwise, she would do it now, how nice. We took our photos, then Mrs. Mackintosh and Robbie (her dog) came back home. We chatted a short time, she said the Mackintoshes settled at Loch Moy in 1336 and have been here ever since. She said the Obelisk on the island across Loch Moy honoring Serenus Mackintosh was built in 1820 by the wife of The Mackintosh. The present Moy Hall is the 4th Moy Hall. Mrs. Mackintosh said nothing can be found of the 1st and 2nd Moy Hall, however, the Mackintosh coat of arms from the 3rd Moy Hall was unearthed and is close by. Mrs. Mackintosh's husband, The Mackintosh of Mackintosh, passed away three years ago. This assignment couldn't have worked out better. She gave us her telephone number to ring ahead on our next trip. We gave her our photo card, 1029am.

Virtually nothing remains of the 14th century castle of the Mackintosh family. It was used from 1337 until 1665 and was said to have a garrison of 400 men in 1422. The island had several other buildings, a paved road and two huge ovens. At Moy Hall, forces under the Montgomery Earl of Loudon tried to capture Bonnie Prince Charlie during the Jacobite rising in 1746. The house was burnt down about 1800 and its successor was demolished because of dry rot. The present Moy Hall was built on the site in the 1950s. It preserved a bed the Prince slept in among other treasures in its museum.

The Muckrach Castle was marked on the map on the A938, Clyde took one photo. It is a late 16th century L-plan tower house consisting of a three story main block. The entrance leads to a wide stair which climbs to the second floor. The basement and the hall is on the first floor. Muckrach was a property of the Grants and the castle was built about 1598. It was restored in the 1980s and can be rented as a holiday home.

Next stop was the Castle Grant. The gatehouse going into the estate was quite large. A car with two ladies stopped and said we could take photos of the castle, 1124am. The Castle Grant was large, there was a car and a tractor in front of the castle, oh well, 1140am. It is a Z-plan tower house with work from the 15th century and enlarged in 1750 and later. The old part is four stories tall and has an attic. The property belonged to the Grants and became their main stronghold. The Grants were Hanoverians and fought against the Jacobites in the 1715 & 1745 Risings. The family became Earls of Seafield in 1811. The castle became derelict and has since been fully restored.

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Time to fill the tank in Grantown-on-Spey, took 16 liters @ 70p/liter for £ 11.27, 182 miles on this tank. Photos of the ruins of the Castle Roy (Red Castle), now a shell of a square castle, close to Nethy Bridge on the B970, still cold and it's sprinkling. Castle Roy was built for the Comyns in the 13th century. It was even more windy and rained harder when we got to the Ruthven Barracks. The infantry barracks were erected in 1719 following the Jacobite Rising of 1715, with two ranges of quarters and a stable block. The Barracks were captured and burnt by Prince Charles Edward Stuart's Army in 1746. There had been a 13th century castle of the Comyns on the site of the Ruthven Barracks. The castle later was held by Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch, as the chief stronghold of his kinship. In 1451 it passed to the Gordon, Earl of Huntly and later that year was sacked by John MacDonald, Earl of Ross. It was rebuilt in 1459 when James II visited Mary, Queen of Scots who stayed at the castle. Fire damaged the castle at two different points in time and in 1689 it was attacked by Jacobites. The castle was demolished in 1718 and replaced by barracks built on the earthworks of the old castle for Hanoverian troop.

Photos of the Clan Macpherson Association Museum and Macpherson House in Newtonmore. There are no castle ruins associated with the Macpherson Clan. The museum is open from April 1st until October, 130pm. The museum houses relics and memorials of rich historical interest not only to the Scottish Clansman but to all of whatever race they may be who are attracted by the story of high resolve, patriotism and loyalty.

The sun is trying to come out, but the mountains are covered with snow clouds, 2pm, looks bright by the Loch Eilean. It poured when we were here on the 97 trip. We'll take photos of the Castle at Loch-en-Eilean, £ 2 for parking. The wind blew harder and harder as we walked the 10 minute hike to get close to the isle and castle ruins. The wind was howling, no rain but it was hard walking against the wind. There were a lot of white caps and sprays of water from the waves, remarkable. Loch-an-Eilean Castle consists of a ruined 14th century keep, hall block and other buildings enclosed by a small courtyard. The Wolf of Badenoch probably built the castle. He obtained the Earldom of Ross by forcing the widowed heiress, Euphemia, to marry him. They lived apart and when the Bishop of Moray criticized Alexander, he retaliated by burning Forres and the town and cathedral of Elgin. The castle was later held by the Mackintoshes, then the Gordons. It was attacked by the Jacobites after their defeat in Cromdale in 1690 but was successfully defended. It was last used in 1715 and when Mackintosh of Balnespick was confined here to prevent him from opposing the Jacobites. The Loch-an-Eilean Castle is also referenced as the Lochaneilean Castle; An Eilean Castle.

We shopped in Avimore since we enjoyed the small village so much on our last trip here, we'll look for a place to eat, 4pm. We found an excellent meal at the Tomatin Inn. We have enough light left when we arrived back in Inverness to go to the Culloden Battlefield for photos of the cottage. I always forget about the Culloden House that is close to the Battlefield. The Culloden House has many Jacobite mementos is now a hotel but wasn't yet opened for the season. The Culloden House mostly dates from 1772-83 and incorporates the cellars of a 17th century tower house. It was a property of the Forbes family but the old tower was destroyed by the Duke of Cumberland after Culloden. Stopped at the Stuart Castle, 6pm. Must be time to go home for the night, the sun was going behind a huge dark cloud, not much light left. I need to do map work tonight, all the assignments have not yet been posted on the map. I missed the St. Duffus Chapel in Tain, we should have gone there after Dingwall. We'll go to Tain before going NW to Loch Assynt and Ullapool.

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Monday, 29 March

Out and about early today, on the road by 910am. The forecast is light rain which will clear to a bright day. We'll fill the tank before heading north, 110 miles on this tank, too 21.57 liters @ 69.9p/liter for £15.08. We arrived in Tain at 1015am to beautiful skies, found a Bank of Scotland to cash travelers checks. Today the exchange rate is \$1.65=£ 1, or \$1,000 = £ 600.

St. Duthac Memorial Church was built in the 14th and 15th centuries by William, 5th Earl of Ross. St. Duthac was born in Tain about the year 1000. In June 1253, nearly two hundred years after his death in Ireland St. Duthac relics were returned to Tain. As the cult of St. Duthac grew in tandem with the burgeoning medieval church Tain gradually became a major religious center. As a place of pilgrimage Tain attracted many members of nobility and royalty as well as the humbler pilgrims. King James IV visited the church at least 18 times over a period of 20 years.

In 1457 a chaplaincy was endowed in the church by King James II and a grant of a mill and lands was made by the Earl of Ross, King James III also endowed a chaplaincy and by 1487 the church had gained full collegiate status. The main purpose of such collegiate churches was to sing masses for the souls of their founders. In this case the King, his family and heirs. A Papal Bull of Innocent VIII confirmed the foundation charter in 1492 a copy of which can be seen in the Tain Museum. The Scottish Reformation ended the activities of the collegiate church though the building survived as a parish church and clergy still received most of the church revenues.

In the 18th century as the local population grew the church reached full capacity. When a new church was built in 1814 the old church fell into disuse and a period of neglect. By the 1870s through public subscription the building, windows and churchyard were restored and it was decided the church should be used for memorial purposes only.

Found the ruins of the first St. Duthus Church at the Old St. Duthus cemetery. This was the first Duthus Church, now in ruins. We went back to Tain twice to make sure we had the correct St. Duthus Church, the Pilgrimage Office was open this time and Clyde got the key to the church. Clyde took photos of the 1879 monument on the main street to honor Kenneth Murray, Provost of Tain from 1825 - 1876. As we were driving out of town we noticed a nice house and stopped for photos. I walked to the house, Mrs. Stone lives there now. The Knockbreck House was her husband's home. It was built by the Ross Family in the early 1700s. The Ross's supported the Hanoverian Cause during the Jacobite Risings. Two hundred muskets were stored at this house during the '45 Rising. This area is Protestant. The Bailey Family bought the house at some point in the 1700s. It was damaged during a feud after the '45 Rising and was restored in the late 1700s. The Mackenzies, Ross's and other families lived here through the years. David Ross was the last Chief of the Ross Clan. His illegitimate son lives in England and has his own private army (according to Mrs. Stone).

Mrs. Stone is raising money to restore an old town hall in Tain to become a Clan Ross Center. She wrote to the Ross Clan Society in Canada and they will help. Her husband was next in line for the head of the clan but the illegitimate son in England became the leader but he never visits. Mrs. Stone asked us to share this information with members of the Ross Clan who visit our booth at the Scottish Games at home. Mrs. Stone, Knockbreck, near Tain, Ross & Cromarty, Scotland, IV19 12Z, tele 01862-89203415. She could have talked for hours and was very interesting.

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We drove by the Culrain Castle on the A836, NW of the Bonar Bridge. Carbisdale Castle was built on the site of the Culrain Lodge for Duchess Blair in 1910-11. The Duchess was the second wife of the 3rd Duke of Sutherland. It is now a youth hostel. It is near here in 1650, that the Marquis of Montrose was defeated by Covenanters.

We arrived at Loch Assynt and the ruins of the Ardvreck Castle at 230pm. We'll look for the ruins of the Assynt Castle which is located on the west end of the loch, however, we couldn't find it. Assynt Castle was an early home of the MacLeods of Assynt. It was a 14th century keep and castle that was located on an island of Loch Assynt. Little if anything remains of the Assynt Castle, the MacLeods later moved their stronghold to the Ardvreck Castle. The weather has cooperated nicely while we are in the north. It has sprinkled some but we've had sunny spells as well. The wind is strong but the weather can be nasty this far north, 3pm. We took several shots of the Ben More Assynt Mountains, waterfalls and snow capped peaks.

The Ardverck Castle was built in 1490 by the MacLeods. It consists of a ruined square keep of three stories that had a walled garden. It was altered in the 16th century. James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, took refuge here in 1650 after losing the Battle of Carbisdale. Montrose was betrayed to the Covenanters and executed in Edinburgh where his body was dismembered and displayed in public. The castle was sacked in 1672 by the Mackenzies in revenge and was replaced by the Calda House, SW of Ardvreck by the main road. The Calda House was burnt by the MacRaes in 1760 and never restored. The property passed to the Mackenzies but they were forfeited after the Jacobite Rising and it was sold to the Earl of Sutherland in 1758.

The Inchnadamph Hotel (close to the Ardverck) was built over 200 years ago. It originally was a coaching inn. The brochure states on the back page 'it is a lot easier to get here than you think'. 'The vastly improved A9 means the hotel is within a comfortable afternoon's drive from Glasgow or Edinburgh'. Good luck on that! Photos at Ardmair of the hills and Loch Kanaird. We'll have dinner in Ullapool at the Quay Plaice Inn, Haddock, pasta, bottled beer and tea for £11.50. When we arrived in Ullapool the skies were dark and threatening. It started to rain as we parked the car. It stormed while we were having dinner. After stopping at a few shops the skies cleared and the sun warmed us. The sun was shining on the boats at the pier, with the white paint of the shops it was quite nice. So far today we have driven 160 miles and we have 55 miles to drive to Inverness, 530pm.

On the way back home, a vibrant rainbow appeared overlooking the river May, it became a double rainbow at times, 6pm. One more castle stop before the light is gone, the Erchless Castle. The Erchless was the former seat of the Chisholm Clan. The Erchless Castle is an altered 16th century L-plan tower house consisting of a main block of four stories and a stair-wing rising a story higher. It was extended in the 19th century. The original entrance would have been in the re-entrant angle but this was moved. The hall is on the first floor and the private chambers on the floors above. The lands originally belonged to the Frasers but passed to the Chisholms by marriage. Erchless then became the main stronghold of the Chisholms. In 1689, the castle was attacked by 500 Jacobites, led by Bonnie Dundee. The Chisholms then fought for the Jacobites at the Battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715 and in 1746 the chief's son and 30 of his men were killed at Culloden. Mary, sister of the last Chisholm lord, tried to counter evictions in Strathglass during the Clearances. The property passed from the Chisholms. On a hill above the castle is the burial place of many Chisholms marked by memorial monuments.

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Chisholm is a Norman name that means in old Beornician the 'waterside meadow good for producing cheese'. It is in the Roxburghshire parish of Robertson, it became a feudal barony. The family holding Chisholm took their surname from it and Alexander of Chisholm witnessed a charter as early as 1248 & 1249. The coat-of-arms has a boar's head. The family was connected with the Border families, the Gordons, Elphinstones, Nisbets, Rollos and Trotters, who also bore the Boar *par excellence*. They were the leading branch to survive the Norman Conquest. The male line was the old Anglo-Saxon dynasts who held Bamburgh and Edinburgh and ruled all Beornicia from the Tyne to the Forth from 878 - 1018.

The Chisholms came to the Highlands where they were known as *an Siosalach*, when Robert Chisholm succeeded his grandfather, Sir Robert Lauder of the Bass, as royal Constable of Castle Urquhart on Loch Ness in 1359. This castle is the key to Inverness and the Great Glen, the laird of Chisholm became Sheriff of Inverness and Justiciar of the North. He inherited his grandfather (Lauder) lands in Moray near Elgin and Nairn. The estate near Elgin was Quarrelwood, which had hardwood trees that provided the crossbow arrows called quarrels. The estate near Nairn was Cantray, which passed with his daughter to the Roses of Kilravock and to the old local family of Dallas (descended from William de Rypely). He incorporated the boar's head with the Moray stars in their own arms.

The Chisholm became the Barony of Comar-more in 1538. This land, the Erchless Castle and the other Chisholm lands had to be sold in 1937. The Clan Chisholm Society recovered the chief's modest house of Comar in Strathglass. By the 17th century, the chief was known as The Chisholm. Many more chiefs became known as 'The', however, the Chisholms have the credit on their one-upmanship to be known as 'The King, The Pope and The Chisholm'. The Chisholm gathered his people on Loch Mullardoch when the Fiery Cross went out for war. Erchless Castle was a seat of the Chisholm until 1887. Comar was the former home of the Chisholm in Strathglass.

A man living in England now owns the restored castle. The castle is his holiday home, it has 27 rooms. The original tower house is believed to have been built between 1594 and 1610, 7pm. The daylight is about gone and the moon is visible. We'll end the day where we started, at the ESSO station, a long day, we drove 223 miles today, 27.66 liters to fill the tank, £19.34.

Tuesday, 30 March

After another great breakfast and hugs for Mrs. Munro, we left for points east. We'll visit the Brodie Castle and Elgin for the Duffus Castle assignment. The four night stay was £18ppn or £144. Blue skies are in the east but dark clouds are coming in from the west and it's quite windy. First assignment is the Brodie Castle and it is in the sun and the daffies are in full bloom. The Brodies were first endowed with their lands by Malcolm IV in 1160 and a Thane of Brodie is recorded in the reign of Alexander III. The castle was damaged by Lord Lewis Gordon in 1645 during the Montrose Campaigns. The castle may date to the 12th century, however the oldest substantiated part is the 16th century 'Z' plan, with additions made in the 17th & 19th centuries. The old tower rises to four stories, the basement contains five chambers including a kitchen with a great fireplace and bread oven. The house was renovated in 1980 after passing to The National Trust of Scotland, although the Brodies still live at the castle. Clyde took photos of a beautiful black Shetland Pony on the way out of the estate.

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The next assignment is the Duffus Castle. The huge ruins on a hill south of Elgin has a view for miles and miles in all directions. This castle must have been magnificent in its day. Duffus Castle served as a fortress-residence for well over 500 years, from the 12th to the 18th centuries. During that time the place underwent great changes, none more radical than the replacement of the original earth-and-timber castle by one of stone and lime in the 14th century. When the first castle was built by Freskin about 1150 AD, it was among the foremost defensible strongholds in all Scotland. By the time of its abandonment, probably by the death of James Sutherland, 2nd Lord Duffus in 1705, the once mighty medieval castle was little more than a decaying fragment of history, completely ill-suited as a residence of nobility.

Freskin, a Flemish soldier of fortune already had an estate in London, he was encouraged by King David I to come north and settle in Duffus. His son, William, adopted the title de Moravis ('of Moray') and by 1200AD Freskin's descendants had become the most influential house in north Scotland. His kinsmen had settled here, at Petty and elsewhere in the province of Moray; a branch of the family across the Firth holding the earldom of Sutherland; and one of them marrying a heiress of Walter de Olifard, thereby acquiring the great feudal lordship of Bothwell on the Clyde.

Freskin's Fortress was a great earthwork-and-timber castle with motte-and-bailey. The motte (the Norman word for 'mound') can still be seen. The castle was surrounded by the now drained Loch of Spynie. It was a massive earthwork entirely man-made, with steep sides and a wide deep ditch around the base. Upon its flat top was the main residence, built in timber and further protected by a wooden palisade, or defensive fence, drawn around the perimeter. The motte was reached by a bridge carried over the ditch from the bailey to the broad expanse of turf close to the ruins. Here were the ancillary lodgings and service offices, the brew house, bake house, stables, workshops, possibly the chapel, all necessary to maintain the household of a mighty lord. None of which survives today. We can only assume from the monumental impressiveness of the earthworks that Freskin's castle was outwardly an undeniable statement of his power and lordship and within, wholly capable of sustaining the ceremony and administration required of a feudal baron.

About 1270, the direct line of Freskin ended with two heiresses. One, Mary, married Sir Reginald Cheyne the younger, of Inverugie in Aberdeenshire. About 1350 the last Cheyne lord of Duffus had died, leaving the estate to an heiress, also Mary, who married Nicholas, second son of the 4th earl of Sutherland. The castle once again came into the possession of a descendant of Freskin; and in the hands of the Sutherlands of Duffus it remained until sold in 1705. Exactly which lord rebuilt the old timber castle in stone in the 14th century is uncertain but a reference from the year 1305 granting Reginald Cheyne 200 oaks from the forests of Darnaway and Longmorn 'to build his manor of Dufhous' indicates a major building program underway and it may be that he was putting to rights damage caused during the War of Independence, then at its height and taking the opportunity that presented of building a more impregnable stone castle.

The motte continued to support the main residence, a two story tower with an embattled parapet at the wall-top from which the garrison could defend their castle. The lord's hall was on the first floor, with bed-closets and a latrine. The ground floor may have been used for storage as well as giving accommodation for the lord's household. Defensive needs have been accorded priority, the windows are small and few in number, the sole entrance at ground level has been protected by a portcullis, a suspended iron grille raised and lowered from a chamber directly over the doorway and doors at either end of this front wall gave access directly onto the wall-walk of the curtain-wall.

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The injudicious building of a great stone castle upon old earthworks is self evident. The tower seems to have been abandoned quite early on, the lord moving his quarters to the block to the left of the tower. This began life as an outer hall, less restricted than that by the main keep with a kitchen at one end and a private chamber at the other. It shows signs of extensive remodeling and this was probably the residence in which Claverhouse dined during his lightening campaign that ended at Killiecrankie in 1689.

On the walk back to the car we met a nice couple taking care of their grand kids. They thought today would be a good day for the small children to see the castle ruins, but the wind was so strong and cold that they cut short their visit. We asked them where the Quarllwood Castle was, the map indicated it was close by. They knew where it was, however, the directions to reach the ruins sounded too complicated and there was only a few stones remaining of the castle. Their family have lived in the area for many years. He thought for a few minutes of the historic buildings in the area to show us. His wife asked if we would like to come to their home for hot coffee to warm us. We said that was really nice but we didn't have the time. He had been stationed at Moffett Field in the states some years ago. He said follow us, we'll take you to the Gordonstoun School.

Their daughter, mother of the grand children worked at this school. The school was on Easter Holiday so we could go in, otherwise, it wasn't open to tourists. What a huge mansion this was and now it is a prestigious private school. Both girls and boys attend the school, the most famous were Prince Charles, Edward and Andrew. At the time the princes attended the school it was a boys only school. The mansion originally was the middle structure of the main building. Towers at both ends of the structure were added at a later time. The date, 1697, and the lion heads on the side gate were quite historic. The gate is the entrance into the magnificent gardens.

Close by was the Round Square Building, now boys dorm. It originally was built by Gordon Cummings hundreds of years ago, he was nicknamed the Wizard. Legend has it he had a vision of when he turned 21 years old the devil would take his soul unless he was inside a building that did not have any corners. He then ordered a round building be built and he stayed there on the night before his 21st birthday. As the night progressed he had second thoughts of being inside this building and fled to the nearby church (passed it on the way to the school, it is now a roofless ruin) and then he was taken by the devil. What a nice family, it was thoughtful of them taking time to share the history with us.

Gordonstoun incorporates a 16th century tower house, rectangular in plan, with two story wings added in 1616. It was originally a property of the Ogstons but was sold to the Innes family in 1473, who sold it to the Gordons in 1616. In 1730 the house was remodeled and in 1775 was given the present classical front. The lands passed to the Cummings of Altyre in 1795. In 1934, the property was bought by Kurt Hahn and turned into the Gordonstoun School.

The map has a castle symbol that could be the Gordon Tower. I read about the large tower that had been in the middle of the village but was moved away from town or the town was moved away from the castle. When we came to Fochabers, beautiful gates were on the left side of the road. This must be the castle, it is the Gordon - Lennox Estate. Clyde asked at the gatehouse if we could take photos of the Gordon Tower. The nice lady told him that we needed to ask at the Estate Office. She gave Clyde directions and off we went. We were looking for the office when the car behind us honked. It was Ruth just back from lunch, she said we could take photos of the Tower on our way out. We chatted for awhile then she invited us in to the office and said our timing was perfect.

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The mansion was used as a hospital during the Great War (WWI) and it had been owned by the Crown until the General Gordon and his wife bought the estate. It must have been something in its day, it was magnificent now. The formal gardens have many roses that hadn't yet started to leaf, fruit trees growing up both sides of the garden walls. Ruth enjoyed telling us the history of the castle as much as we enjoyed hearing the stories. She drove us around the estate, there are several holiday homes that can be rented for the popular stream fly fishing. She said Prince Charles came here to fish some time ago. She showed us the whipping post which had been in the middle of the village of Fochabers but the owner of the castle moved the village further away. The huge tree by the post was planted by Queen Victoria. There were many rare trees in the estate. People lease the land of the estate to grow crops. The estate has 640 hectares of land, a hectare = 2.2 acres. The Gordon - Lennox Estate was huge, 14,080 acres!

The 16th century tower house (Gordon Castle), originally known as the Bog o'Gight, was the principal residence of the Marquises of Huntly (later Dukes of Gordon). The 'Cock of the North' was the 'Gudeman of the Bog' (a gudeman was a tenant-farmer). Gordon Castle passed to the Lennox dukes of Richmond (royal Stuarts, from a son of King Charles II) who are now Dukes of Gordon. The castle was given to the Government to settle Death Duties. The Grenadier Lt. General Sir George Gordon Lennox, grandson of the late Duke of Richmond & Gordon bought back the castle and restored it.

Next assignment is Fordyce Village and the Fordyce Castle. The castle is next to the cemetery and in the middle of the small village. Photos of big vaults in the cemetery and the tiny old church. The lady at the post office said the Fordyce Castle recently was purchased by new owners. They are renovating the castle and as a result cement mixers, dumpsters and men were working in and around the castle. The view of the corner side of the castle hid the construction work. That is the best we can do for this assignment, 345pm and we need to find a B&B for the night. Fordyce Castle consists of a 16th century L-plan tower house of three stories. The castle is dated 1592 and was built by Thomas Menzies of Durn, Provost of Aberdeen. It was used as a village school and was restored.

On to the Delgatie Castle, the lady of the castle was unloading packages from her car. I asked her if we could take photos of the castle and the five black Shetland ponies. The ponies were cute and very friendly. This castle was different, it looked like portions of the castle had been a church or portions of a monastery at some point. Delgatie Castle consists of 15th century keep of five stories and may incorporate older work. The walls are very thick, hard and whitewashed. There is an adjoining 16th century gabled house and lower later buildings. The original entrance is now engulfed by the 16th century addition. A later entrance leads through a vestibule to a turnpike stair in one corner of the keep. The basement is vaulted and contains the old kitchen with a wide fireplace. The hall on the first floor is adorned with the Hay arms. The fireplace lintel is dated 1570 and has many mural chambers. Tempera-painted ceilings survive on the second floor dating from the 1590s. The wings were added in 1769 and the castle was extended again in the 19th century.

Delgatie was a property of the Hays, who were created Earls of Errol in 1452. Sir Gilbert Hay of Delgatie, with many members of his family, were killed at Flodden in 1513. Mary, Queen of Scots, spent three days here after the Battle of Corrichie, when the Gordon family were defeated by her forces. The 9th Earl was summoned for treason in 1594 for supporting the Gordon Earl of Huntly and part of the west wall was battered down by James VI's forces. The 9th Earl went on to fight at Glenlivet in 1594, when the royal forces, under the Earl of Argyll, were defeated, but the rebellion failed and he was forfeited. Sir

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William Hay of Delgatie was standard bearer to the Marquis of Montrose, during his campaign of 1645. Although defeated at Phillphaugh, Hay managed to return the standard to Buchanan Castle but he was executed with Montrose at Edinburgh in 1650 and buried beside him in St Giles Cathedral. The Hays supported the Jacobites during the 1715 & 1745 Risings and suffered for it. Delgatie passed to the Gordons in 1762, the Duffs in 1798, then the Ainslies in 1868 but then returned to the Hays. It was made the Clan Hay center in 1948.

We started looking for a B&B in Turriff to no avail. As usual, when we're looking for a B&B sign we don't find them, other times signs are everywhere. We looked and looked for a B&B, after chasing a B&B sign we lost the trail. After an hour of driving on the back roads we saw an excellent B&B signs to the Sunnybrae Farm B&B. We debated whether to stay two nights or just one, as this B&B was quite reasonable, £17 ppn ensuite. Dinner tonight was at the Ythanview Hotel Bar in Methlick, gammon £6.95; Jay's (owner of the Hotel) hot pork curry £5.95, Guinness and lemonade for £16.60. I complimented Jay on the curry, the peppers made it nice and hot.

Wednesday 31 March

Our twin bed room with bath worked out OK, however, we're too used to a shower. Christine was nice, we enjoyed visiting with her. They bought the farm eight years ago and moved north to Scotland. Christine & Eddie Staff, Gight, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JA, tele (01651) 80656. They had lived in the midlands of England and they both love Scotland. After a great breakfast (930am) we're off to our first assignment, the Haddo House. It's overcast today, we have been spoiled with yesterday's sunny and warm day. Christine and Eddie were hit hard by the BSE (cow disease) disaster. Christine works part time and opened the B&B (two rooms) to help pay the bills. Eddie takes care of the cattle and farm.

There was a monument commemorating Waterloo on the grounds of the Haddo House, the home of the Dukes of Aberdeen. Nothing survives today of the original castle of the Gordons, who held lands here from 1429. The present Haddo House, an Adam Mansion of 1731-6, was built for William Gordon, 2nd Earl of Aberdeen. Patrick Gordon of Haddo was killed at the Battle of Arbroath in 1446. In 1644 Sir John Gordon of Haddo was captured after being besieged in the castle for three days. He was imprisoned in 'Haddo's Hole' in St Giles Cathedral before being executed by beheading. The castle was destroyed.

The last time we visited the Tolquhon Castle (Forbes) it was cold and snowing so hard my camera quit working, 11am. Tolquhon consists of a ruined 15th century keep in one corner of a courtyard enclosed by ranges of buildings, including a drum-tower gatehouse. The entrance leads into a long passage that opens into three cellars, a wine-cellar, a kitchen with a wide arched fireplace; and a bake house. There is also a pit-prison. The hall on the first floor has a secret chamber reached by a trapdoor from above. The private chambers are on the upper floors. The original keep was built by the Prestons of Craigmillar but the property passed by marriage to the Forbes family in 1420, who built the rest of the castle. The 6th laird died at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547. James VI visited in 1589, during his campaign against the Gordon Earl of Huntly. The 10th laird saved Charles II's life at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. The Forbes sold the property to the Farquhars in 1716 although the 11th Forbes laird had to be forcibly removed from the castle in 1718. The property later passed to the Gordon Earl of Aberdeen, used as a farmhouse, abandoned then became ruinous and placed into State care in 1929.

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Next stop is the Fyfie Castle on the A947, beautiful gardens and the daffies were in full bloom. Clyde took photos of the pond and a nice reflection of the boat house, 1130am. The five towers of the castle enshrine five centuries of Scottish history, each is named after one of the families who owned the castle. The oldest part dates from the 13th century for the Lord Leith of Fyvie Gordons, Dukes of Richmond, Huntly and Aberdeen (different branches from the Gordon - Lennox Family). The clouds have cleared but it is hazy, perhaps from the wind blowing the dirt and from burning the heather in the fields. No wind today!

Time to fill the tank, drove 214 miles on this tank, gas @ 68.9p/liter, took 26.6 liters for £18.30. Now we're on the hunt for the Slains Castle, the map looked like it should be on the hill above Port Erroll so I walked up the walk of dirt/grass and could see the silhouette in the distance. It now was very foggy and it was misting, hope the photos came out. I couldn't get very close to the castle. I walked as far as I could to the cliffs. I could see people walking to the castle, there must be a road closer to the castle. We drove north on the A975 to the car park to the footpath to the castle but we didn't have time and it was too drizzling, 130pm and heavy fog on the ground. The huge ruin of Slains Castle stands on the cliffs above the sea. It incorporates part of the basement of the 16th century tower house of Bowness. The castle now consists of buildings around a central courtyard with adjoining ranges. It was altered in 1664 when a corridor was inserted within the courtyard and again in 1836 it was rebuilt and granite faced. At one time it had three extensive gardens.

It was built by the 9th Hay Earl of Errol after James VI had destroyed his castle at Old Slains at Cruden Bay, after the Hays participated in the rebellion of 1594. We were later told that Slains Castle was the inspiration for Bram Stoker when he wrote Dracula, it does look spooky. We followed signs to the Old Slains Castle on the Slains Estate. I had read in the clan books that a recent chief of the clan had built her home close to the tower ruins of the Old Slains Castle. We'll have to come back here with it is good weather, the North Sea is below, 215pm.

Next stop is the Keith Hall which is now luxury apartments. I thought this was an assignment, close, the assignment was the Leith Hall, oh well. Found the Balquhain Castle ruins, it was built in the 15th century, remains of the tower are all that is left of the castle. On to Castle Fraser which was under major renovation and restoration, scaffolding was on all sides of the castle. We took photos anyway, we'll have to come back to this castle when the construction work is completed. Clyde took a shot of the Regional Office of the Fraser Estate, 415pm. We'll have time for the Drum and Crathes Castles and quit at 530pm. We found a B&B with Bill and Doreen Mutch, £20 ppn at the 'Dorena' B&B, Strachan, By Banchory, Kincardineshire, AB31 6NL.

Thursday, 1 April

We had a huge breakfast, too much but we couldn't help ourselves. On the road by 845am to find the Strachan Castle or ruins. Bill never heard of it. We went to the post office and in five minutes four people came in and gave us their opinion. A lady driving a bus said she will lead us to Castlehill, that must be what we're looking for. It is the only place where a castle had been in this area. Castlehill is a mound of dirt just outside of town. The cottage across the street from Castlehill is named the Castlehill Cottage. The lady driving the bus said that people come to Castlehill to dig for archeological finds. This is the best we can do for this assignment. The folks in the post office thought Strew could be the same as Strachan (Strew was a possible location for this castle).

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The sun is out today but there is a lot of haze, not the best weather but the forecast is for a warmer afternoon. Next stop is the Craigiever Castle, in Alford on the A980. Craigiever is a fairy tale like castle, the great tower stands just as it was when William Forbes built it in 1626. The house remains as it did when the Forbes - Sempill Family lived in the castle, 1010am. On to the Castle Forbes, a grand family home that was built in 1815 by the 17th Lord Forbes. It is now the family home of his great-great-great-grandson, Malcolm, the Master of Forbes and his wife, Jinny. The castle overlooks the River Don at the heart of the 6,000 acre Forbes Estate. Castle Forbes is not a hotel, Malcolm and Jinny invites you to join the family and enjoy the unique luxury experience of Scottish heritage and hospitality. Clyde knocked at the door to ask permission for photos. A young woman, most likely Jinny said we could, she gave Clyde brochures on their home.

Next stop is the Kildrummy Castle and Gardens, the view from the hotel is the ruins of the Old Kildrummy Castle, it was snowing the last time we were here. Glenbuckat Castle is next, it was snow bound when we were here in 97. Glenbuckat is a 'Z' Plan tower house built in 1590 by John Gordon and his wife, Helen Carnegie. It belonged to the Gordons until 1738 when John Gordon, the prominent Jacobite sold it to Lord Braco, later Earl of Fife. The castle is a notable example of a Scottish Tower-House of the late 16th century. The main block is flanked by Towers at diagonally opposite corners which increased both accommodation and security.

Thought we would look for the Colquhony Castle, went by it the first time. The scant remains of the castle is next to the Colquhony Hotel in Strachan on the A944. On to the Druminnor Castle, east of Rhynie off the A97. The castle map indicates it was built in the 15th century, it was restored some time ago and is in good shape, 115pm. On to the Leith Hall assignment, the center of a 286 acre estate which was home of the head of the Leith Family from 1650. Mrs. Leith-Hay gave the property to the NTS in 1945. On to Huntly and the Gordon Castle at Huntly, the seat of the Gordon Clan.

When we were a few miles from Huntly I realized I forgot the Leslie Castle assignment. We backtracked about 20 miles to the village of Leslie. The owners were working in the garden, Clyde asked if I could take photos. They said fine. The Leslie Castle is the original seat of Clan Leslie; the present 1661 tower is the third castle on the site since 1070. The castle was built in 1661, one of the last fortified houses in Scotland. There are defensive features; however, the impression of Leslie is a grand baronial residence, not a fortress. The Leslie Clan can be traced to the 12th century when a Flemish nobleman named Bartholomew, was granted the Barony of Lesly.

The Baron and Baroness of Leslie restored Leslie from a ruin to a comfortable residence with a living heritage. The couple working in the garden was the Baron and Baroness of Leslie. It took them ten years to restore the castle. With the help of their daughters they managed the castle as a hotel then decided to keep the castle as their private home. They were really nice; they held a worldwide Clan Leslie Society gathering here in 1995. Almost 400 people came. Evidently, Moore is a Sept in the Leslie Clan as well as a Sept in the Campbell Clan, 330pm.

Hope the wind picks up tomorrow to clear the haze, Scottish mist! We found the Roys Croft in Aberlour for the night. Sheena Mitchell, Moray, AB38 9NR, tele (01340) 871408, £ 18ppn. We were still full from the big breakfast this morning and decided to just have fruit in our room and take an early quit, we're tired.

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Friday, 2 April (Good Friday)

We had a great stay with Sheena and a good breakfast. She offered a menu that has kippers. We made our phone calls on her phone for B&Bs for Fri/Sat at the Duffs in Newburgh and Sun/Mon with the Playfairs. Jim & Viv were booked on Tuesday so we'll find a place for that night, otherwise, we're set for B&Bs the rest of the trip! Since it is Easter this weekend, we may have encountered problems finding a place to stay. £2 for calls. Sheena worked as a tour guide at the Glenfiddich Distillery. She may have been our guide when we were there in 9/94, she looked familiar.

On the road by 10am, first stop is the Ballindalloch Castle. This castle opens today for the season, on Good Friday, £2pp for admission to the grounds. We were the first visitors to the home of the Grant Clan. Shots of the 1696 Doocot across the fields of full bloom daffies. Getting low on gasoline, finally found one, put £10 worth of gas in the tank, 11am. Driving on the A939 to Braemar, we passed the Lecht Ski Tow, which was closed for the season. There were still many patches of snow, 1135am.

Clyde took photos of the Corgarff Castle, we've been at this castle when it was covered in snow, in a wind storm and now it is in hazy sun but sun never-the-less. The farmers are burning last year's heather which contributes to the haze. So far this trip, we've crossed the River Don 13 times! This is the scenic route to Braemar, must be beautiful in September with the hills covered in purple heather and no haze. We'll try to get into the Balmoral Castle. No luck, the castle doesn't open to the public until 10 April. Clyde read in the 4/5/99 paper that Prince Charles and the boys were at Balmoral for Easter Holiday.

Photos of the Braemar Castle. We drove 490 miles on this tank (includes the £10 of gas), found a station, took 20.68 liters @ 69.9p/liter for a total of £24.29, 2pm. Next stop is the Blair Castle, 2pp entrance fee to the grounds and limited access to the castle. The Blair Hercules Statue and Gardens were nice. After we left the estate, Clyde found a view from the road that gave us a shot of the side we couldn't get to. It really is a nice day today, I haven't worn my coat all day! Continuing NW on the road above Blair we came to the House of Bruar, a big commercial area; woolens, golf, food store and Clan Donnachaidh Museum, 4pm. We bought a sandwich/soda at the food store.

Castle Menzies is our next assignment, this is the seat of the Clan Menzie. We arrived too late for a tour of the castle, the last tour left at 430pm. This was a nice castle, we would have enjoyed this tour. We bought castle books in the tiny gift shop, we'll try to stop here on our next trip when we have more time. As we drove south to our next assignment, I noticed a sign 'Macnab Clan Burial Ground', too bad we don't have enough time to check this out. For our next trip to this area, the burial grounds are located at the bridge at the south end of Loch Tay and the Killen Village. At the 1999 Murphy's Irish Days, we were given an assignment for The Morenish Lodge Hotel on Loch Tay. The gentleman giving us this assignment indicated he and his fiancée were engaged here. The lodge was originally built around 1750 as a shooting lodge for the Earl of Breadalbane, 6pm.

On to Loch Earn and the restored Edinample Castle assignment. Edinample had recently been restored, the Macgregor Clan was associated with this castle at one time. We arrived at the Duffs at 705pm quite tired. They remembered us from the October trip, it was good to see them again.

Saturday, 3 April

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Quite foggy this morning, the Duffs said it was foggy on Friday morning and soon cleared. We'll go inland then come back to Tayside this afternoon. Would like to see the Drummond Castle and Gardens, however, the gardens don't open until 2pm. Stopped for photos of the St. Bean's Church and Cross slab in Fowlis Wester. I went into the church and was given a brochure on the history of the church from the lady arranging flowers for Easter Services. Britain celebrates the Easter Bank Holiday weekend starting on Good Friday through Easter Monday, four days! The lady pointed to the low window on the side of the church, the Leper Squint. There had been a Leper Colony nearby many years ago, the Lepers would come to this window and ring the bell to receive sacraments, 1045am.

St. Bean was the great grandson of Aedh Dubh, King of Leinster in Ireland, who became Bishop of Feighcullen, County Kildare. One of seven brothers, ardent Roman Catholic ecclesiastics and founders of churches, St. Bean came to this part of Scotland and finding standing stones began to preach the Gospel to eradicate dark pagan practices associated with the stones. This church was the gift of Gilbert, Earl of Strathearn and was the parish church for seven centuries. The current building was erected in the 13th century, what preceded this building is not known. Restoration was made in 1927, the Pictish Symbol Stone on the left of the entrance near the Vestry was discovered embedded in the wall and dates to St. Bean's time. The figure being swallowed in the top right corner probably is Jonah. St. Bean died in 720 AD. When Inchaffray Abbey was founded, St. Bean's Kirk was 'appropriated', meaning the income of the Parish Church went to the Abbey. Just a small pittance was given to a vicar or curate to carry out his duties.

The neglect of the parish was one of the causes of the Reformation. The headstone under which the gate is entered is a copy of an older stone close to the Vestry. There is a trefoil at the top and below the Hebrew word for God, Jahweh. The text, 'Keep thy foot when thou enterest the hows of God' is from Ecclesiastes, 5.1 At the Chancel at the other end of the Kirk is a "leper squint" which allowed the many lepers in Scotland ("Liberton" near Edinburgh means "Leper Town") to watch the celebration of Mass from outside without coming in contact with the people. The recess in the wall on the left of the Communion Table was the "Sacrarium" where the sacred elements were kept. In 1927, the interior of the church was altered. An arch replaced the old retaining bar at the east side; the entrance door was re-sited to its present position; a new Communion Table, modern pulpit and lectern of traditional Celtic design were gifted; and the oil lamps were fitted with wrought-iron supports and wired for electricity.

The Pictish Stone at the entrance stood for centuries at the center of the Village Square. In August 1991, the Stone was moved inside to preserve it. The Stone is 8th or 9th century and has an unusual feature of the protruding arms of the Cross, which indicates an Irish influence. Historic Scotland has taken care of the Stone since 1939. Fowlis Wester is a tiny village, however, it was once an important center. The road between the Church and the Post Office was the main road to Perth; the old Inn was a busy hostelry; the Highlanders drove cattle through the village to markets, returning north with coal, etc. In its hey-day, this village was as important as a cattle selling village as that of Falkirk. For a time after the Reformation, this was one of only four charges in the district having a permanent minister of its own (others were Auchterarder, Strageath and Tullychettle). Crieff was only served by a lay reader. Interesting history!

On to the Balhousie Castle, now the Black Watch Museum (closed today). Next assignment is the Kinnoull Hill & Woodland Park for the Kinnoull Tower. It took us about 45 minutes for the round trip to walk up the hill to the tower. Too bad it was so foggy and hazy today. It would have been a beautiful view from here, as it was we couldn't see the ground. Kinnoull was a castle of the Hays, George Hays of

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Kinnoull. George was knighted in 1609, chancellor in 1622, Viscount Hay in 1627 and Earl of Kinnoull in 1633. He is buried in the old church of Kinnoull at Bridgend of Tay,

A Castle Huntly sign appeared, we'll follow it. Signs to castles are not as prominent as this one is. We were surprised to see several more signs with the directions to the Castle Huntly which is located on the west side of Dundee. Sure would be nice if all the castles had signs like this one. When we got to the castle it was being used for a prison, no wonder there were good direction signs, 3pm. Next assignment is the Fowlis Castle, just in case the assignment is this one and not the Fowlis above Inverness. Fowlis belonged to the Maules from 1330, then to the Mortimers with the marriage to Sir Alexander Gray of Broxmouth who became Lord Gray of Fowlis. Fowlis was sold to the Murrays of Ochertyre. It became a village tavern then fell into disrepair. It was restored and now is used as a farmhouse, bunches of big daffies were on the road close to Fowlis, 130pm.

On to Loch Clunie to see if we can find the remains of the Clunie Castle. We parked the car at the Dunkeld Cathedral, Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch, is buried here. We walked back to the west shore for photos of a block house ruins with daffies in bloom thinking this was all that remained of the Clunie Castle. Clyde saw an outline of a wall on the island on the loch, that is the ruins of the Clunie Castle, 5pm. We drove 285 miles on this tank, stopped at the ESSO station by the B&B and they were closed already. We visited with Annabel and Stewart Duff over a dram of whisky, several drams, 'oh just a wee bit more'. We sure enjoyed their company. They holiday in Greece, their favorite get away place. Hillview B&B, 46 Scotland Terrace, Newburgh, Fife, KY14 6AR, tele 01337-840570, £ 60 for two nights lodging. Stewart's birthday is 3/28 and Annabel's is 1/26. The Duffs sent Clyde a birthday card on his 4/28 day. They mentioned that we didn't leave an address on the October trip.

Sunday, 4 October (Easter)

The Easter bunny was here! When we came down for breakfast an Easter egg and an Easter shortbread were on our plates. How nice, we weren't forgotten, the Easter bunny found us in Scotland! They will be Greece in May, I invited them to California for a visit. They said they would love to visit us in California, however, the air fare is expensive. On the road at 930am to an overcast and foggy day. Found a gas station open on Easter morning, took 68.2p/liters for a total of £ 14 (partial fill up). Found the Whitefield Castle ruins, just a piece of the wall remains. We asked a lady in Falkland where the Kilgour Farm was, she gave us directions to the Falkland Estate and added the Kilgour Farm is after the Falkland Estate. Once inside the Estate, we found a sign to the family mausoleum. The laird built the mausoleum before WWI and didn't get to finish the structure, that's why there is no roof on it. Also, no roof means no taxes!

A man walking within the estate told us the Kilgour Farm is further down the road. We drove a few miles and asked one more resident where the farm is. We finally found it, Ian Munro owns the farm now. He took us to the hill where the old church of Kilgour is reported to have been, nothing remains of it now however. He showed us the mound that is the old burial grounds. Ian added no bones have been washed out of the mound for several years. In his garden is a coffin lid or stone marker that the previous owner moved there. It has a cross and hour glass carved on the lid below all the moss. Ian has lived at the farm for 25 years, he originally is from England. We apologized for coming unannounced on Easter morning, he said that was fine.

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On to the Leslie House and Lochore Castle. Ian said the flowers are the bright spot in the winter, they usually don't see the sun for one month during the winter. Another Leslie Village, we thought we would find the Leslie House in case the Leslie Castle in Aberdeenshire wasn't the correct Leslie Castle (House). No luck, Clyde asked a man mowing his lawn where the Leslie House is. There is a smaller Leslie Home two doors down from his home (photo of a ranch style home, however, it doesn't look like this is the one we need). He said the older one is west of the village and it is now owned by the Church of Scotland and is used as an Old Folks Home. We drove through the village one more time and found it this time after asking a resident where it was.

The Lochore Castle is located south of Lochore in the Lochore Meadows Country Park, 1231pm. The Castle ruins of a 14th century keep was formerly four stories high and a castle and a motte was originally on an island in the loch. The castle had a courtyard enclosing a range of buildings with round corner towers. The island was known as Inchgall, the isle of strangers. The motte was constructed by Duncan of Lochore. The property passed to the Valances who extended the castle and built the keep. The property later passed to the Wardlows of Torrie. In the 17th century the Malcolms of Balbedie acquired the castle.

Mining was hit hard in this area and as part of the largest operations of its kind in the UK was landscaped into a park. The loch was drained at some point in history, 1230pm. Next stop is the Wemyss Castle which is located on the hill above the north shore of Fuite of Forth. The Wemyss Parish Church of Scotland was below the castle. Found a gas station open on Easter, @ 68.9p/liter, took £28.15 liters for 19.39; 384 miles on this gas.

Visiting with the Duffs last night, we helped Stewart drink his birthday bottle of Edradour Whisky. We liked the single malt so well we thought we would get a bottle at the distillery. The distillery was located in Pitlochry, 40 miles north of Wemyss. The Edradour Distillery is the smallest distillery in Scotland, three people create the malt. I think the visitor shop had more people than the distillery. We visited the Glenturret Distillery yesterday, it is reported to be the oldest distillery in Scotland, 3pm. The Glenturret Distillery in Crieff on the A85 was established in 1775. The Glenturret Single Highland Malt is made by the 'pot still' process, a tradition unchanged since it began in the 18th century. We stopped here during our 96 trip, time to stop again.

We arrived at the Playfairs at 530pm, good to see them again. They will be eating their Easter dinner soon, we'll visit with them in the morning. We could use an early quit today, Clyde drove over 200 miles today.

Monday, 5 April

After a great breakfast of kippers (smoked herring), we're off to a day with blue skies, 915am. Filled the tank in Newburgh, 143 miles on this tank, gas is 67.9p/litter, took 16.10 liters for £10.93. We're heading south today for our assignments. First castle is the Neidpath Castle. Neidpath dates from the 14th century and was remodeled in the 16th & 17th centuries. An earlier castle on this site belonged to Sir Simon Fraser. He defeated the English at Roslin Moor in 1302 but the English captured and executed him. The castle passed by marriage to the Hays in 1312, they built the existing castle. Mary Queen of Scots stayed here in 1563 and her son, James VI, stayed here in 1587. The Hays were Royalists and held out against Cromwell in 1650 longer than any stronghold south of the Forth. Cannons damaged the castle, it was

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repaired and in 1686 sold to the Douglas Duke of Queensberry. It passed to the Earl of Wemyss and March in 1810. Neidpath was used in filming of 'The Bruce' and 'Merlin, the Legend Begins'. The border has strong connections with the Merlin legend. According to a book by historian Nikolai Tolstoy, Merlin drowned in the Tweed after being christened at Stobo Castle by Kentigern, aka St Mungo. This myth is assumed to be Welsh in origin, but Tolstoy argued that the Celtic connection originated in the Scottish lowlands.

Next assignment is the Traquair House on the Tweed River. The next assignment, the Deuchar Castle proved to be quite difficult. The first house Clyde stopped at to ask directions didn't answer the door when he knocked. Ladies were home we could see them in the window. The man at the next house came to the window of the car and explained he was from England. He hadn't heard of a Deuchar Castle, but thought a young couple down the road would know. We found their home, however, they never heard of the Deuchar Castle either. The Deuchar Bridge or what remains of the bridge was close to their home, they suggested that was all that was left of the castle estate. He added there is a Deuchar House above the bridge, there could be ruins of a castle on that property. We were going to drive to the house to ask, however, the gate in front of the house was closed and locked, no trespassers!

There was a symbol of a castle on the castle map where the Newark Tower was. The map had a faint symbol of the Deuchars Castle close to the Newark Tower. The castle book lists a Deuchar Tower, a 16th century tower house of the Homes, Murrays and finally the Dewars. Clyde took photos of a train bridge and an old stone bridge on the way to the Hermitage Castle on the B6399 road, 2pm. We came to the Hermitage Castle on the 98 trip, however, this area was flooded and the castle was closed. I needed the umbrella when I walked to the castle, it was heavy fog and mist that seemed like rain. This was a huge castle that has seen many battles since it borders England. In 1556 James Hepburn succeeded his father and became the 4th Earl of Bothwell. The new Earl was also Lord of Liddersdale, Crichton and Hailes, Lord High Admiral of Scotland, Sheriff of Berwickshire, East and Mid Lothian and Baillie of Lauderdale. Bothwell had extensive estates in eight southern Scottish shires. He was the chief of the name of Hepburn and could rely upon several Border lairds as allies. In 1565 the Queen appointed him lieutenant in the Borders with the aim of imposing royal authority upon the region.

On 8 October 1566 during his efforts to reduce lawlessness in the Borders, Bothwell was wounded by John Elliot of the Park. Bothwell's men carried their leader to his headquarters at Hermitage Castle. The Earl convalesced there from 8 to 21 October, when he was taken to Jedburgh. Although the queen had reached Jedburgh two days after Bothwell was wounded, she remained there dispensing juices until 15 October. Only upon completion of her work did Mary make the long ride to consult with her lieutenant. On 16 October Mary Queen of Scots rode 50 miles between Jedburgh and Hermitage Castle and back to see her wounded adviser, Bothwell.

She probably began her ride at 7am and reached the castle at noon. After a visit of not more than two hours the Queen covered the route back to Jedburgh in six hours. She accomplished this ride only four months after the birth of her son. The day after the ride the Queen fell extremely ill and remained in her sick bed for 10 days. Mary's half-brother, James Stewart, Earl of Moray, escorted the Queen on her ride to Hermitage. His presence confirms the political nature of the visit to Bothwell. Moray was Mary's chief adviser and a strict Protestant; he would not have allowed Mary to make a lover's tryst with Bothwell. Mary married the Earl of Bothwell on the 15th of May 1567, only three months after the death of her second husband, Darnley.

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We'll take the A7 back to Edinburgh. We were home by 530pm, Clyde is coming down with a respiratory infection. We brought antibiotics with us just in case this happened. I worked on my journal while Clyde slept, hope he feels better tomorrow. An interesting article in today's Herald, 'New Year Bonus for Cable Staff' for Y2K support. Managers at the giant telecom Cable & Wireless will receive a bonus of £500 per day for working over New Year 2000, while other staff will get up to four times their basic salary. This pay is for hours worked between 12/31 & 1/3 and an additional lump sum of £250 for 12/31 & 1/1. Staff who are on call will receive £250 for Friday or Saturday or £150 a day for Sunday or Monday. This company employs 11,000 workers in the UK. Research firm Incomes Data Services reports a growing number of companies, particularly in utilities and finance, are offering staff three to four times their basic pay to work over the millennium.

Tuesday, 6 April

On the road to Edinburgh at 9am, there are bright spots along with the dark clouds and sprinkles. Filled the tank, drove 197 miles yesterday, gas was 67.9p/liter, took 15.64 liters for £10.62. We parked the car in the Edinburgh Car Park, visited St. Margaret's Chapel, my favorite spot in the castle and the Great Hall. I'll get photos of the swords that are on display in the Hall, we have a request for Claymore Swords. The castle guide in the Great Hall said William Wallace was 6'7" tall and he used a double handed sword (located in the Wallace Monument in Stirling). I asked the guide at the entrance of the castle which statue was Robert the Bruce. He responded Bruce has the crown on his head, his statue is on the left when entering the castle. The statue of William Wallace is on the right.

Another special request was the Last Drop Pub and other scenes along the Grassmarket in Old Town. I stopped at a Woolen Shop on the Royal Mile that was 'closing down (going out of business), they had a good half price sale. The south side of the Castle above Princess Street is flooded with daffies in full bloom, really pretty. Next is the Clackmannan Tower in Clackmannan. Clackmannan was a residence of the Bruce Family. The lands were granted to Robert de Bruce by King David II (son of King Robert the Bruce) in 1365, the last of that line died in 1772. The widow of the last laird lived on for some time and in 1787 is said to have knighted the poet Robert Burns in the castle with the sword of Robert the Bruce. The main surviving part of the castle is the tower house, though there are extensive traces of courtyards of buildings and gardens around it. The tower was on top of a hill that had a circular view for miles around. The Stirling Castle and Wallace Monument can be seen from here, 1pm.

We'll stop at the Linlithgow Palace in Linlithgow. We had been here on our first trip to Scotland in 1994. We had a few photos of the inside of the castle ruins but didn't have photos of the outside of the castle. The castle is huge, I walked down to the loch to take photos, circling around the building for shots at all angles. We found a tea shop in Linlithgow that was open for soup and tuna sandwiches. We were home at the Playfairs by 5pm, early quit tonight.

Wednesday, 7 April

After a great breakfast of smoked haddock we said good by to the Playfairs, 9am. Looks like we'll have another mixed day of weather, although there are more blue patches this morning. We'll go to the Hopetoun House since it was raining the last time we were there. Filled the tank again, 67.9p/liter, took 25 liters for £17.02. We found the back way to the Hopetoun House, it looks much better in the sun. I think

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we can get closer shots from this entrance. It is open to the public. We'll go again to the House of Binns for photos in the sun, the daffies were in full bloom, glad we returned here too.

Next stop is Hamilton and the Cadzow Castle ruins and Hamilton Palace. Cadzow was constructed between 1500 and 1550. It was known as the castle in the woods of Hamilton. Sir James Hamilton of Finnart built it for his half brother, the Second Earl of Arran. The remains are crumbling and are fenced off. Visitors can not get close to the ruins, it must have been a massive castle in its day. We looked for the Hamilton Palace on the 98 trip and couldn't find it. We found a map to the Hamilton Palace Sports Center that showed where the Hamilton Mausoleum was. The Mausoleum was all that remains of the Hamilton Palace.

The Crookston Castle was on our way so we stopped for photos. Crookston is the altered ruin of an unusual 15th century castle consisting of a central tower with four square corner towers set within the 12th century earthworks, 115pm. On to the Craighends Mansion assignment or we tried to find it. The castle map indicated the Mansion was south of the B790 and east of the B789 and South of the River Gryfe at Craighends. We drove all around this area, crossed the river and still couldn't find it. The castle book indicated it was demolished in 1957, thought something would be left, oh well. The lands may have belonged to the Knoxes of Ranfurly and passed to the Cunninghams by the mid 15th century. Craighends was acquired by the Boyles of Kelburn but later returned to the Cunninghams who built the mansion, 2pm.

The next assignment is the Dumbarton House in the Dumbarton Castle. Photos of the Governors House which is in front of the castle. Went inside the Governors House which is the castle tourist office to ask about the Dumbarton House. The lady of the office never heard of a Dumbarton House. So far we're 0 for 2 assignments today, Craighends Mansion and the Dumbarton House. The last assignment of the day and for this trip is the Hunterian Art Gallery. I found the Gallery on the Glasgow map that the Playfairs had. It looked like it was near the University of Glasgow which is on the NW end of Glasgow. We drove on the A82, the Great Western Road, into the City Center. We finally saw signs indicating we were close to the University. Clyde asked a cab driver if he knew where the Gallery was, he responded we're within walking distance. Park your car and walk up the hill.

The University is huge, it first opened in 1451! After parking the car, Clyde asked another man where the Gallery was. He responded, follow me, I'll take you there. He was out for a walk and was glad to have a purpose. He told us he retired from the University seven years ago and he was surprised how many places had been moved since he had worked there. We found the Hunterian Museum, took photos and asked where the Gallery was. The lady at the counter told us down the steps on the other side of the building. We found the Gallery outside the University, it was modern architecture compared to the other buildings. It is 4pm now, we need to get out of the City Center before the commute traffic begins and we need to get to Jim & Vivs to pack, oh joy! The walk back to the castle was nice, the daffies were in full bloom in the parks, really nice.

Viv welcomed us at 5pm, she was working on her computer and couldn't find the £ symbol. Clyde helped her while I packed. Everything fit, barely! Lights were out by 9pm, guess we have to go home tomorrow.

Thursday 8 April

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Kippers and eggs/bacon and all the extras for our 830am breakfast. Viv's porridge is creamier than others we've had. We gave Jim & Viv the B&B cards that we collected during our holiday. We gave those B&Bs the Garnock Lodge (Jim & Viv's B&B) as many travelers need a good B&B close to the Glasgow Airport. We also have enough brochures to have at our booth at the Scottish Games at home. They gave us a bunch of tartan book markers that we'll distribute as well. We need to leave by 930am for our 11am flight to Heathrow. It's a civilized time, we didn't have to get up at an ungodly hour. The return flights were on time. We arrived at our house at 830pm California time, exhausted after our great adventure!

NOTE: Halloween became a popular holiday in the United States in the 1880s. Scottish immigrants may have introduced it about 20 years earlier. Halloween decorations included thistles and plaids. Victorian Halloween parties used decorations found in the fall, such as pumpkins and corn stalks. Jack-o'-lanterns also are mostly Celtic in origin and became popular in America about this time with the arrival of large numbers of Irish and Scottish immigrants. Irish folk tales tell of a miserly man named Jack who had dealings with the devil. In these tales, Jack offers his soul in exchange for various things and then tricks the devil into promising not to take the soul. When Jack dies, his dealings with the devil exclude him from heaven and his trickery of the devil keep him out of hell. Forced to walk the earth for eternity with a piece of coal in a hallowed-out turnip to light his way, the miser becomes "Jack of the lantern" or jack-o'-lantern.