

Fair Isle Times

VOLUME 46 ISSUE 20

PUBLISHED SINCE 1978

9th JUNE 2023

Fishing with Steven

I went fishing with Steven on Sunday. We also went with Alan who is one of our supply boat crew. He's a fisherman. First we went to pull up the creels but we got one girl lobster so we took a wee bit out of her tail with a knife because then people know it's a girl and not to catch it. We also got one under-sized lobster. We got lots of crabs and one sea urchin. Then we went fishing for a wee bit. I caught a little cod and a big cod then we went back and Steven gutted them for me. It was really fun. Thank you Steven for taking me out.

Luca (8)



My Outdoorsy Week

I had quite a busy weekend. A lot of it was in the veg patch helping Mum to plant things out. Hopefully we will grow lots of vegetables like peas, carrots and broad beans, which are my favourites! I really enjoyed digging and it is nice when you pull out a big root from a weed! On Sunday, we went to Chapel and then to Pat and Neil's where I built a den with Luca and Ander, which was lots of fun and exciting because I like finding new places to build dens. It was a nice sunny weekend, so we had lunch outside on both days and I did some reading on the swing seat. Our caddy lambs are getting less milk now, so they are always really loud when you are near them! We also played a game of Risk and I won!

At school we have been doing outdoor PE lessons. We have been going rock climbing at the coast near Rippack. The rocks there are particularly good with lots of nice rock faces and high bits to climb. We also learnt about safe rock climbing!

I am excited because lots of orchids have started flowering in lots of different places. The purple marsh orchids are my favourite. We saw lots of these when we were collecting flowers to press with Ranger Sally. They need pressing for quite a while, but hopefully we will get to see what they look like soon.

Freyja (11)

Play Date

On Friday, my friends came to my house to play. It was so sunny so we played outside with Nerf Guns. We went to Shirva so that Freyja could get her Nerf guns. Then we played a game on the way back. When we got back to Schoolhouse, we played Minecraft Hardcore on the Xbox and ate snacks.

On Saturday we went to Pat's house and Ander and Luca were there too. Me and Luca played outside with Don dog. We played with the dog toys. I like Don because he is fun.

Harris (8)

Chapel – this Sunday at 11am with Neil leading, all very welcome to join.

Fair Isle Times Occasional Interview

From time to time we like to introduce our readers to folk living here in Fair Isle, this week we hear from our Head Teacher, Gillian. Enjoy!

Name: Gillian Laura Maxwell

Age: 41

How long has Fair Isle been your home? 16 months come the 16th June!

Who do you live with? My husband Tom and two children, Harris and Heidi, plus Tammy the senile Bengal cat and Thistle the corn snake.

What is your earliest memory? Falling out of a moving car when I was 4 years old. It sounds a lot worse than it actually was but thankfully the car was only driving out of a car park. My mum and I were getting a lift home from the local sports centre with her friend and their son. The car was an old banger with no seat belts in the back. Being young kids, there was some general carry on in the back involving giggling and shoving. As the car door on my side wasn't shut properly, this game quickly ended in tears when the door flew open. I can recall, clear-as-day, tumbling out and then my mum rushing towards me. All was fine ... just a faint scar on my forehead where the doctors removed some grit!

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up and why? For years I wanted to be a vet as I loved animals growing up and was constantly adding more pets or beasties to our household - cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, goldfish... there were some temporary 'pets' too like minnows from the river, tadpoles and even a collection of pet snails at one point (all eventually set free of course). Once I brought a kitten home from a local farm disguised as a Mother's Day present. The farmer's wife drove me and the kitten to our house but sadly this gift was rejected as we already had an elderly cat at the time. I wasn't allowed a dog so I walked all the neighbours' dogs for free. I was obsessed with horses and horse-riding growing up, offering free labour to local horse owners in exchange for riding their horses. I remember getting up at the crack of dawn in the summer holidays (around 11 years old) to cycle to the local hunt kennels with a friend to muck out stables, groom horses and play with the hound pups. My aspirations of becoming a vet were pretty solid as a child; however, fast forward to secondary school and

the brains, focus, drive and discipline to achieve such grades was not part of my character in the slightest! Luckily, my other ambition was to work with children.

What do you do for a living? Primary teaching which I have to say is a brilliant job, although teaching my own kids brings a whole new dynamic to it - pros and cons for all concerned! I have to thank my parents for keeping me on track to become a teacher as I almost changed course after second year. My parents knew this job was right for me so jumped in the car and headed up to Dundee to convince me to keep going. It turns out that I really enjoyed third and fourth year of the course and progressed on to have a great career in teaching which of course brought me to this unique role in Fair Isle! Life has a funny way of opening doors at the right time!

If you didn't live in Fair Isle, what would you like to do for a living? Probably teaching, although a pipedream situation would be to own a horse-ranch/boutique winery in New Zealand.

Do you have a personal hero? My late Grandpa, William Harris. He was a very special man, a real good egg of a person and a genuine, kind soul. I loved listening to his stories ... when he was blown off his feet during WWII and how the doctors decided to leave a piece of shrapnel in his knee (this is why his leg would shudder from time-to-time)... how he met my gran at a local dance then moved to Salisbury, South Rhodesia to get married, start a family and begin his own building company, only to return to Scotland a few years later when sick, elderly parents needed support. My gran's shock when he took her to see the derelict and roofless 'new' house that he bought for them, yet being a builder/joiner, he transformed it into a home she loved. He lived to almost 91 years old and never complained about a thing, despite losing his sight for the last 15 or so years of his life and spending over a decade alone after my gran passed – fiercely independent in his own home of course! He was always delighted when one of his five children or eleven grandchildren walked through the door to visit. He was a selfless man and a true legend. You can see the sentiment behind my son's name, Harris William.

What is your philosophy for life? Be kind to others, be honest, look after your health and listen to your intuition!

If you had a free, 'fantasy' 24 hours with no travel restrictions – where would you go and what would you do? I would return to Lake Wanaka, New Zealand! In my early twenties I spent two years living, working and travelling around Australia and New Zealand and this was by far my favourite spot and the place I stayed the longest. I only intended to pass through Wanaka on my travels but soon found myself drawn in by the incredible scenery and friendly vibe. Within days I had found a job, a place to stay and made friends for life so ended up staying for 10 months to the very last day of my VISA then it was back to rainy Renfrewshire for real life and a proper job. There is so much I would love to do there again: snowboarding at Treble Cone, climbing Roy's Peak, touring the boutique wineries, horse-riding in Cardrona valley, skydiving or bungee jumping (although not sure I have the nerve now).

What is the most enjoyable thing you do? Before parenthood, I did many enjoyable things like running, cycling, snowboarding, horse-riding, hillwalking, camping, photography and travelling! The most I can manage nowadays is the occasional walk which is such a cherished half hour of peace in my day. A beautiful location like Fair Isle makes this even more enjoyable being surrounded by nature and spectacular views. I also love a good binge on Netflix or Paramount! If you haven't watched 1883 or 1923 then I would highly recommend it!

What is the hardest thing you do? Being a parent!!! I thought I knew what I was getting myself in for but NOTHING prepared me for this journey... each stage brings new challenges and our two certainly knock out the curveballs. Thankfully all the struggles are balanced out by the intense, unconditional love you feel for these little humans who turn your life upside down.

What concerns you for the future? I worry about my children's future and how they will navigate the crazy world of today – it's too fast, too selfish and too obsessed with social media and consumerism, and less concerned with climate change!

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time? Such a hard question! 10 years ago I didn't see myself in Fair Isle! In the next 10, all I can hope for is that my family are healthy and happy and that my kids are finding their way. Maybe they will be settled and thriving in AHS halls and I'll be reconnecting with some of those hobbies I used to know!

What has occupied your time this week? Another busy week in school - running our cruise ship stall, my link officer visiting on Wednesday, a peerie makkers knitting session (thanks Marie and Eileen), our 'daily mile' walk to deliver a thank you card to Stewart for helping with the skekler hats, preparing for our open day for parents on Friday and teaching the children of course! Out of school, the usual routines like playing with the kids, homework, bedtime stories and trying to get out for that cherished walk.

An exciting past-time this week has been browsing holidays abroad for Tom and I this summer. My parents have offered to look after our kids for a WHOLE WEEK so we can celebrate our 10th anniversary. What an offer to be grabbed with both hands as we've barely had a break to ourselves... in fact the last (and longest) time away as a couple was our 3-night trip to Shetland in December '21, just after the job offer. It is so hard to decide where to go! Our first thought was to return to Malcesine in Lake Garda where we got married but we haven't been abroad since our wedding/honeymoon so other destinations are more tempting! The questions is... will I be pining for the children after a day or two?!

What was the best thing to happen to you this week? Obviously being told about the child-free holiday offer!!! Also seeing a lapwing chick up close. I am very new to the world of birds and know very little but since moving to Fair Isle I just love the lapwings because of the way they fly and how their call reminds me of an 80s computer game. On Tuesday, Derek stopped by with a lapwing chick as he needed to borrow scissors to free its foot from a tightly wound piece of wool. Heidi and I just loved the chick!

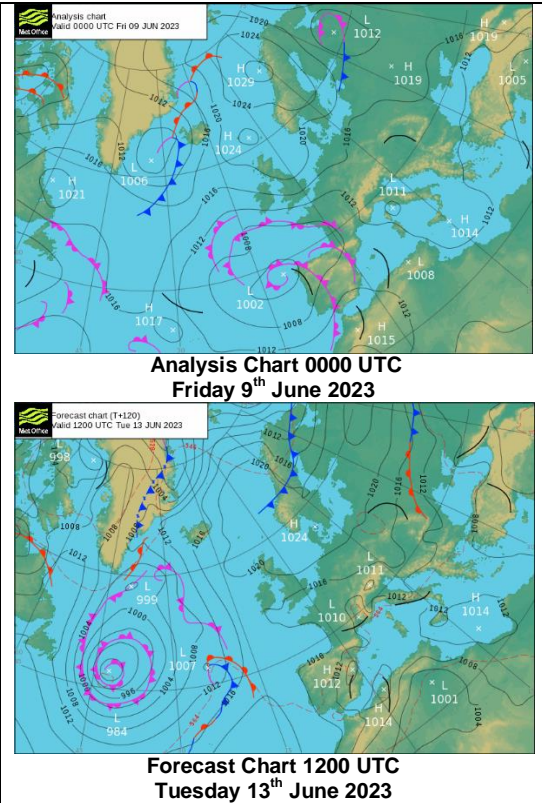


CAPTION COMPETITION
Spotted at Houll this week, this very brave/stupid hen hopped up on to Guillermo's barbecue, fancy putting a caption to it?



Cruise ship Hondius moored off Meoness this Tuesday

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



GENERAL SITUATION

Friday 9th June 2023

With high pressure across the Norwegian Sea and Scandinavia forecast to persist our current spell of settled weather is also likely to continue for the foreseeable future. However, a weakening depression over Biscay, deflected northwards by the high pressure, may result in showers on Sunday. With the anticyclone firmly established across Scandinavia the resulting south-east to easterly airflow, as well as high temperatures across England, could well bring the risk of haar to north-east Scotland and the Northern Isles next week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures around 12° or 13° Celsius by day and 8° overnight.

FRIDAY 9th: Dry but cloudy with a few brighter spells, cloud gradually lowering later with patchy mist and hill fog overnight. F3 SSE wind tending ENE. **Sea State:** Slight with a 1 metre or less NNE'ly wind swell.

SATURDAY 10th: Mostly dry, rather cloudy with some patchy mist and hill fog, brighter later. F3 increasing F4 SE wind.

Sea State: Slight or smooth with a 1 metre or less NE'ly wind swell.

SUNDAY 11th: Mostly cloudy with risk of showers, the F4 SSE wind increasing F5 then easing F4 overnight.

Sea State: Slight with a 1 metre SE'ly wind swell.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK

Temperatures 13° or 14° Celsius by day, perhaps 15° or possibly even 16° on any sunny days with light winds. Overnight 9° or 10°

Celsius.

MONDAY 12th: A misty damp start, becoming dry and brighter with some sunny spells during the morning. Moderate SSE winds falling light later. A warmer day with mist or fog developing during the evening.

Sea State: Slight with a 1 metre SE'ly wind swell.

TUESDAY 13th: Early fog clearing then dry and bright with warm sunshine, though a moderate SE wind bringing risk of haar later. **Sea State:** Slight with a 1 metre SE'ly wind swell.

WEDNESDAY 14th – SUNDAY 18th: Staying settled with variable amounts of cloud and light to moderate SE wind bringing risk of haar. **Sea State Wednesday:** Slight with a 1 metre SE'ly wind swell.

Dave Wheeler

