

Easter Holidays Pt 4- Isle of Skye

Thursday

Bluebell the motorhome is parked up next to another motorhome down the end of the beach road at Staffin Bay. We are parked up underneath the cliffs, at sea level, next to the beach that is famous for its dinosaur footprints. The weather is clear (hurrah)



our pitch at Staffin Beach

Today, we drove the road from Broadford to Staffin, that passes through Portree. As soon as we departed Broadford the scenery

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stepped up from what we'd seen yesterday (granted the weather definitely helped!) As we got towards Portree Keith suggested we try the walk to the Old Man of Storr seeing as the weather was behaving. Our guide book intimated that this was the most popular walk on the island, and given how busy the car park was I'd have to agree.



the view of The Old Man of Storr as we approached on the road

Thankfully we've (I've!) been trained well and so before setting off we made a full packed lunch including flasks of soup and tea, sarnies, cake, crisps, choc and a cheeky tinny of Tennants! (It was only 10am!!) We also made sure we had all our hiking gear on, boots, weather trousers, macs, fleece etc, as

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despite it saying it wasn't a hard walk in the book, you just can't be too sure. I'm glad we did- unlike every other person we passed (and there were lots) it never fails to amaze me seeing people rock climbing in converse, and today- heeled boots!!!!

We took (by accident) the more advanced rock climbers scramble to the base of the Old Man – and it was tricky to say the least at the top. I possibly had a minor panic when I realised the path around the base was non-existent, but I'm proud to say we persevered and survived(!) and scrambled round, and therefore were rewarded with the most amazing views:



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Having carted my tripod up, I was pleased to be able to give it a whirl, and I was very impressed especially given the wind speed up there! The spikes on the feet are ingenious.

Naturally, once having our picnic sat underneath the old man himself, we noticed the far easier and safer path that we should have taken up, so we had a good chuckle about that and looked forward to our descent.

Once safely back in the van, we drove on 5 miles or so for our second luncheon of the day- this time at Kilt Rock waterfall view point. The waterfall falls over the cliff into the sea and is next to the rock formation entitled Kilt Rock- supposedly it looks like a kilt. I will

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let you decide!



Next and final stop, the beach at Staffin to a) see if we could stay overnight there and b) hunt these dinosaur footprints. We'd read the best time to see them is at low tide, which we'd missed by 4 hrs, but nevertheless we happily hunted for an hour or so, aided by the trusty hip flask of homemade sloe gin of course as by then we knew we had found our pitch for the night.

Sadly no such luck with the hunting of footprints, but we will stick around until low tide

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tomorrow, due at 1137 to see if we have any luck. Keith asked a local who was walking his dog, and apparently he's lived here years and NEVER seen them. So we will see!

Friday and Saturday

Bluebell the motorhome is parked by a river, in a sheltered valley behind Brit Stop number 822.

We woke up after a quiet and relaxed night to a bit of a murky one in the weather department, but it didn't affect our plans- we were going to have a late breakfast then go footprint hunting at low tide, then drive the 5 miles or so to the Quaring- a mystical unusual rock formation, including The Needle, The

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Prison and The Table. Our book told us that whatever the weather it was something to visit.

First things first- the dinosaur footprints. I'm happy to say, after an exciting (and competitive) hunt, Keith found them, we think! This to us looks like the photo displayed at the info board, and we are fairly sure it is it, but without the Staffin museum open and no indication on the beach it's a bit difficult to be 100% sure. □



Next we drove up a great pass to take us to the start of the Quaring walk. At first the path seemed a breeze, much easier than yesterday's Old Man of Stoer, but as we ap-

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proached the bottom of “the needle” a trickier path presented itself to get us to “the table”. We took the path with some sense of trepidation, but equally were keen to get to the top section to appreciate the full sense of enormity. The path was hard going, but we got there eventually, just in time for the mist to come down! Typical eh? Oh well, we got to the top.



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Once back at Bluebell we were exhausted, cold, wet, hungry and a bit grumpy, so rather than venture out to find a new spot for the night, we decided to head back to the familiarity of the Staffin Beach spot, where we'd spent a pleasant night last night. We weren't the only ones- our fellow motorhome neighbour had also returned, so we settled in for a chill and more importantly an early night.

All was well until around 6pm when our alarm bells were raised when our neighbours very quickly packed up shop and moved up to the next layby- a higher slip layby, that was right on the edge of a cliff. We couldn't understand why they had moved in such a

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rush- the wind was picking up and it seemed odd to us to go to a higher level on a cliff edge. Ever being the optimists, we decided to punch their spot, as they'd nabbed the best spot earlier and settle in for a panoramic view. About an hour later the wind picked up, and convinced it was just a passing storm, we made light of it, and settled in waiting for the storm to pass. By 10pm it was showing no sign of easing, if anything the winds were getting stronger and stronger, and bluebell was rocking further and further. Keith admitted to me this morning by this stage he'd noticed the windows buckling. We out an hour later, we'd managed to get enough mobile data to load the met office and bbc weather, both of which saying that the winds were south westerly and would in-

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crease to 50 mph by 5am. As we were parked our bum was totally the first thing these south westerly winds were grabbing as they bounced off the sea. Excellent- obviously this is why the other motorhome moved!

We set the bed out deciding once again (like Glencoe on Sunday) it was now far too dark and dangerous to drive and that we would be brave and hold tight. Once the bed was out we lasted approximately 5 mins before I decided enough was enough and that we were moving. My justification was that the exit road followed the south westerly wind so the wind would be pushing us up the hill rather than crossing us and making us wobble.

We got the 500 odd yards up to where the

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other motorhome had retreated to, and to our surprise there was no sign whatsoever of the winds in that spot, so we joined them and hit the sack. All was well, apart from the battling rain, I can't remember ever hearing such heavy rain until 5am when the wind swiftly changed direction to the west, which meant we were now entirely swaying, the bike rack was clattering, the TV Ariel was squeeking- you name it. Keith this time made the call to move- this time back up to the main road and along maybe 10 miles to a sheltered pull in where we got an extra hours kip.

So when we woke up at 8am, it's safe to say the mood was fractious- we were both drained and in addition to our lack of sleep

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the bed had broken, one of the lights had fallen off and the fridge door had broken! We spent the next half an hour fixing Bluebell, but we were both thrilled that other than these minor unrelated problems, there were no signs of leaks, or outer damage. Hurray, we'd survived.

We decided a chill was in order, so drive round the coast road to Uig, to stop at the Isle of Skye Brewery to stock up, then onto the Fairy Glen- a magical mystical small valley just outside of Uig where it's really unnaturally green, and the hills and lakes are all in miniature! This is a natural phenomena caused by glacial meltwater ten thousand years ago, but I can see why the myth is that fairies live here as the hills look tiny and per-

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fect and have ridges round them- you honestly can imagine the fairies living here!!



our visit to The Isle of Skye Brewery, in Uig



The Fairy Glen

We headed towards Dunvegan and are now happily nestled behind a sheltered Brit Stop- an old hunting lodge that is now a bar/restaurant and inn and so, seeing as it's Saturday

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night we are going to have a few drinks and a chill in there tonight. Sounds perfect, and just what the doctor ordered after last nights adventures!

Sunday

We had a great relax at our Brit Stop last night, and got mildly tipsy on the inn's special ale- brewed specially for them by the Isle of Skye Brewery. It was delicious and we happily chatted to the landlord and landlady for a couple of hours.

After a great nights sleep, we hit the road in the rain, and managed to fill with water at Dunvegan. We had a bacon butty looking out towards the castle, and then followed the road to Carbost, home to the Tallsiker dis-

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tillery. Sadly the distillery is closed today, however there is a fantastic smell of whiskey lingering in the air, and the pub here, The Old Ship, is a fantastically warm and cosy place to spend an hour or so, before heading back towards Portree for our final night on Skye.

Perfect!



Dunvegan Castle



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Portree



storm brewing over Cuillin Hills



pleasant way to spend our last night on Skye



*our pitch over looking the Cuillin Hills, and
half a mile stagger from the Sligachan Hotel
bar!*

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