



At the bottom of this cliff is 'Down Rope'

UCKLUN TULL UN DEM TULL

Pitcairn News

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Julie and Kari in New Zealand tull

With both of us in current medical predicament, we thought we would not have the energy to produce a newsletter for August. But mum's excitement in her daily updates of the week-long visit of the Picton Castle was too tempting to pass up tullen yorley about. And then there have been all the accidents and medical incidents which added to the news. So, us two uckluns decided to tulla yorley with Julie doing most of the tullen this time until Kari gets back home in September. Thanks to Timothy Young we have a new website to host the newsletter. Even though he still needs to make it pretty, it is already functional with all the past newsletters posted. Check out www.demtullpitcairn.com

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- The Picton Castle visits Pitcairn
- Medical: Accidents and Incidents



La Railleuse - THE FRENCH NAVY VISITS – well sort of.

From past editions of Dem Tull yorley can tell that the French Navy visits Pitcairn from time to time. They usually visit for a day, come ashore to sightsee and have a barbecue at the Square, buying our souvenirs and goodies. We always look forward to having them. Despite the scheduled visit and the planned program, on this occasion the medical evacuation took precedence. They arrived on Monday morning already alerted to the problem so their medical team came ashore to check out the situation which was assessed as serious and so followed a hasty retreat back to the vessel and with the patients safely ensconced on board took off at great speed bound for Mangareva, as next day was Tuesday the day of the once per week schedule of the commercial flights between Mangareva and Papeete and hospital. They made it in less than 24 hours (300 mile distance between Pitcairn and Mangareva). *Wow dem must be fly.* The picture of the *La Railleuse* motoring at full speed cutting through the waves washing over her bow is a sight to behold for ship lovers. Our photographer reckons she went from zero to 22 knots in the blink of an eye. This is not the first time the French Navy has helped Pitcairn with medical evacuations and we are very grateful to have them nearby in French Polynesia. Merci.

THE SAILING VESSEL “PICTON CASTLE” AND HER CAPTAIN, DANIEL (DANNY) MORELAND – THE BIGGEST HIGHLIGHT IN A LONG, LONG TIME.

I quote from the Picton Castle’s Captains Log posted by Maggie Ostler on 2 August 2010.

“Within minutes of being ashore, some of the crew said to me that they were starting to understand why Picton Castle crew who have been to Pitcairn before speak so fondly of it. The atmosphere at the Landing, as crew and islanders met, was one of excitement and anticipation. It was hard to tell who was more pleased – we as guests or our hosts.”

How true. Pitcairn had eagerly awaited the visit of the Picton Castle for many months. Mum kept a running update on when they would arrive, or when they were delayed. You hardly ever hear them refer to “Picton Castle” is coming. It is usually Dannys shep (ship) comen (coming). Well Danny comen, Danny se ya (has arrived) and Danny se gorn (have left) and hopefully Danny gwen (will) come again. He has been a friend since the 1970’s when he first arrived on then another regular sailing vessel “Romance” with owners and good friends Captain Arthur and Gloria Kimberly. When Danny left Pitcairn the first time in the 1970’s did he leave his heart behind too? Dem Tull. Did one of our lasses heart sail away from Pitcairn on that trip too? Dem Tull.

With the visit normal life on Pitcairn came to a standstill. Even the Island Council postponed their usual meetings because of the visit. Before its arrival, Council argued that landing fees should be waived for Dannys ship. It was pointed out that Danny was bringing goods for the Government, freight free. How could they argue with that?

As with previous visits, orders were placed with Danny for all kinds of goods. The list was endless and would have taken hours of shopping. Lawnmowers, foodstuff, gasoline, **timber (see photo)** stainless steel drums, concrete and heaps more. There was a special cargo of 34 little turtles which got special approval by Council to bring for our children. They also brought heaps of used clothing for sale and two market days held where there was frenzied buying by all. Mum hadn’t sounded so excited in a long time. Beats buying tinned meat and spaghetti in the Pitcairn store anyday.



When Danny visits, we know the score. He divides his people into two shifts and they come ashore for two days at a time before rotating. They managed two shifts each ashore this visit. Before arriving a list is compiled and posted on the notice board matching guests with hosts. Mum was excited they were getting someone who had stayed with them before. The guests bring ashore food and presents for their hosts. Again I was regaled with much excitement on the presents received. The time difference between Pitcairn and NZ is 4 hours and I seldom ring home after 10pm Pitcairn time, when it is lights out. When the phone rang at 11pm Pitcairn time we were worried something must have happened, but no, they had just finished the first of the two concerts and mum had to ring and tell me all about it. Each crew rotation had a concert, assisted by the islanders. The children started off by singing, the guests performed their acts and the islanders finished by singing "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" and the "Pitcairn Goodbye Song". Poor Danny was dragged onto the stage to sing with ucklun. With the regular updates of the visit Kari and I were just as excited out here as you were at home.

With the extra space on board since our cargo was unloaded they had room to fill it with some of our goods. So they went fishing in the two longboats one day and "full a box" (caught plenty of fish). They caught Nanwe, Snapper, Tuna, Wahoo (cuta) as well as other species. They even took on board goats meat. I think goats meat is yucky but some love it and we have too many goats on Pitcairn. I think some went through quite a few bullets trying to shoot off breadfruit from the trees. The hosts and guests went coconut gathering and cutting plun (bananas). The plun is easy to chop down although you have to go into the valleys to get them. The photo is of a Norwegian guest having cut the bunch of plun herself and she was pleased as punch. I shuddered when I saw the trendy clothes she was wearing to gather the plun because the sap of the plun dripping from the stalk with the fruit and from the plun tree itself stains clothes a dirty brown colour and the stain just do not wash off.



OUR NEW GOVERNOR



A belated welcome. We have a new Governor Vicki Treadell, who was sworn in by Chief Justice Blackie on 3 June 2010. Her first visit to Pitcairn is scheduled for the first Claymore II rotation at the end of August.



CONCLUSION OF DANNYS VISIT

You can tell from my ramblings that the visit was full on from start to finish. There were lots of sightseeing and parties, which carried on into mornings' early hours. Sometimes after a party the hosts, expecting two guests for breakfast found they had four, and others none. This was a special visit and the guests stayed with their hosts as if they were family. According to my family they had fun and enjoyed themselves immensely, but as they are not young themselves, at the end of it they were also knackered. Happy knackered though. Last time Picton Castle sailed off with one of our young girls and this time they sailed off with young David Brown, - lucky thing - an experience I am sure would be memorable. Hooray Danny, Picton Castle and all who sail on her.

A MEDLY OF ACCIDENTS and MEDICAL PROBLEMS

In Pitkern: **UMAOLA UN** means Clumsy one and **HUPPA** means Cripple or an Invalid

KARI – THE FIRST MEDICAL STORY

One would be forgiven if one thought we are a bunch of umaola un. I was watching Kari trying to bend her knee and failing. Then I looked at her massive swollen broken thigh before looking down at her deformed big toe (from the time she chopped it off with a lawnmower) and my sense of humour got the better of me. I just burst out laughing. She has now had the operation on her knee and is in recovery mode, going to the physio to try and get all the bits working again. The hardest part for her was being the navigator for the foreign taxi drivers taking her to her many appointments and getting lost.

SECOND, THIRD and FORTH – a trilogy

Then there was Heather with a broken wrist from tripping over her dog's lead at home. How umaola Heather, un you too Toge who nearly chopped off a finger, thankfully he only lost the top bit when he dropped a heavy tool on his hand. Then a Wahoo (fish) tried to eat Kerrys arm before he had the chance to eat it.

FIFTH - Continuing on the medical theme and on a more serious note, one of our men has an eye problem which we understand can lead to a more serious problem and possibly blindness if left untreated. For years now Pitcairners have always come to New Zealand for medical treatment but a medical visa application for that person was denied by NZ Immigration because of his legal convictions. NZ have their rules and their refusal is understandable. What is not understandable is that it appears Medical Visa problems for our men may have been overlooked in the myriad of new laws, policies and procedures implemented over the last few years. This event happened prior to Christmas last year and is still unresolved. The clock is ticking.

SIXTH - And the medical problems continue:

Another of our men had been in agony unable to lie down to sleep because of leg pain and morphine didn't work. It was thought he had got an infection in his huppa hip and it could be serious. Should they send for a passing ship to take him to a hospital for medical treatment? Danny from the Picton Castle was prepared to cut short their stay on Pitcairn to take him to Mangareva. But there was a question mark over whether the patient would have the same visa problems as the eye patient. Where would he be able to go for treatment? Would he have to go all the way to Britain? As Pitcairners have had full British passports since 2002, the patient could not be denied access to medical help in UK, or could he? The cost for the patient would be prohibitive. All costs of medical treatment including travel costs, accommodation, meals etc are paid for by the Government in the first instance and then one third of the total cost is billed back to the patients to be repaid by installments, except for pensioners who, at present, are subsidized 100% but according to council minutes the subsidy for pensioners may be reviewed. The patient was eventually evacuated by a French Navy ship (see article). When he left Pitcairn they had no idea where he would end up. Fortunately he is now in New Zealand, and following a scan his medical problem has been diagnosed as pinched nerves and a slipped disc. Aaaaaja. (Ouch). He has now had his operation and is back to his normal self.

SEVENTH - We conclude the medical reports with the accident Down Rope.



Most of you would know of the Polynesian petroglyphs which are carved into the cliff face just above ground level at Down Rope. See the picture of the Bosun from the Picton Castle imitating one of the drawings. Getting to Down Rope is no mean feat, but attempted by most visitors. When I was there in 2008 I took one look and said Nah. Even some of our men, my vintage, had said they would think twice before going down now. And to think we used to think nothing of going down for the pandanus thatch for basket weaving, fishing and even going down at night time for crabs for fishing bait the next day. But when there is an emergency you do not think twice about the risk. You just go. The picture on the front page shows the cliff face and the challenge required of one to climb down. To me the name is misleading. There is no rope to climb down, not anymore, not that I can ever remember there being one. It is mountain goat territory.



On a recent Saturday young Jimmy from Picton Castle went down Rope with a large group of visitors to check out the beach at the bottom as well as the famous petroglyphs. Half way down or half way up the cliff face he slipped and fell. Lucky for him a pandanus palm tree broke his fall otherwise the thought of an alternative outcome is not worth considering. When announced on the VHF radio that there was a problem Down Rope and help was needed, Pitcairn and by Pitcairn I am referring to everyone, immediately moved into rescue mode. This is what we are good at, pulling together in a crisis. There are no facilities whatsoever down there. So stretcher, first aid kit and medications everything had to be taken down. There was danger in the rescue but that was incidental to rescuing the patient who was hauled up the side of the cliff with the aide of many of his friends and Pitcairners. The series of photos of the rescue describes the terrain and rescue efforts better than I can.

Until they could get him to the medical centre they did not know what to expect, except they knew one of his arms was in bad shape. They did not know if there were any internal injuries and still didn't when he was evacuated on the French Navy ship *La Raillouse*. The other patient with the pinched nerves and slipped disc (although he didn't know the cause of his considerable pain at the time) is Pitcairns Xray man who selflessly put his immense pain aside and went to the Health centre to take the xrays of the newest patient. That's what we do.

Not having a hospital with all the specialised equipment and personnel, if a patient is suspected of being gravely ill we traditionally set up night time rosters to watch over them, which we did for Jimmy in one hour shifts. Fortunately the *La Raillouse* was scheduled to visit on the Monday and was the better and faster option than a sailing ship to evacuate the patients. From the picture of Mum and Dennis sitting on the bike at the Health Center, you can see the large crowd standing around on the deck – everyone just wanting to be there to show their support. They made it to hospital and we wish Jimmy all the best for a speedy recovery.

Finally on the medical theme – Pitcairn is lucky we still have a doctor but we don't know for how much longer as it has been mooted that maybe we can go back to just having a nurse like before. Hope not.





PITCAIRN'S LEGACY

Well Julie asked me once again to write something, so here I go again. Instead of writing on a specific topic, I thought I'd write a reply to certain inquiries about what I do. One question asked of me is why do I write articles for "Dem Tull"? Good question! I am not much of a writer or a historian, I suppose I have a passion for many of these topics, but the reason I am eager to share this information is deeper. It can be basically summed up in this text from James Norman Hall's book "The Tale of a Shipwreck," when he visited Pitcairn in 1933. While there he met the old, blind Aunt Ann McCoy. I will now quote from the book where he asks her about Pitcairn history and genealogy:

*"Couldn't you do this work yourself, Miss McCoy?" I asked.
She shook her head. "I am an old woman," she said, "it would be too much for me, working alone. I suppose it will never be done now. There are only a few of us left who know. We will soon be gone."*

There you have it. A lot of Pitcairn history is gradually disappearing or being corrupted in some way or another. I am well below the calibre of Ann McCoy, but I feel that sharing these little paragraphs in this newsletter will in some way preserve a small percentage of information on Pitcairn history.

KARI TULL

Mary Anne McCoy was five years old in 1856 when the Pitcairners were evacuated to Norfolk Island, and she returned to Pitcairn with the second party in 1864. Her parents were Margaret Christian (granddaughter of Fletcher Christian) and Matthew McCoy, who was killed when they tried to fire the Bounty Cannon in 1853. James Russell McCoy, Pitcairn's leader for about 20 years, was her brother.

PROJECTS

The first go at concreting the main road in 2006 finished just past the village square. Plans have always been afoot to take it right to the school at the other end of town. In the Island Council Minutes of 21 December 2009 the Commissioner Leslie Jacques says that there was ongoing budgeting for roading projects and they went on to discuss how far to concrete the Main Road to for the next stage. By March 2010 they had concreted as far as Lens house. Then they waited for payment of their wages and waited and waited. Despite the December 2009 statement that there was budgeted money for roading projects it appears there was actually none, well maybe not for that road anyway and they did not get paid, which generated much comment as each payday passed empty handed. Finally a few days ago they got paid. Hip Hip Hooray.

With our low incomes it is earnings from special projects that provide the finance for those special larger purchases like fridges freezers and such. There have been high hopes of earning heaps with all the various projects sold to us and the world's media in recent years. These were projects we didn't really ask for but were indicated promisingly by the former Commissioner and accepted with much expectation on our part. Examples are the now defunct project of the breakwater at Bounty Bay, the now 'on the back burner' project of building a new store. The media recently published stories of the signing of a contract with Hydro Tasmania for the windmills to be installed at Taro Ground in 2011. There was much excitement over the massive project of building an alternate harbor on the Western side also in 2011 and a new road to Tedside at a cost of millions of pounds. In reading council minutes one would be forgiven if one thought all was A-okay and the projects definitely going ahead. In expectation of the 2011 commencement of both projects there were even discussions regarding the clashing of the two major projects and there not being enough manpower. But in a recent council meeting Governors Rep, Lucy Foster cautioned council that the projects are all still subject to final approval and we must be realistic. I think we have all become realistic, or maybe pessimistic? As I have said before and will probably be saying for some time yet – fingers crossed.

Article 1.

When reading sections of the Regular Council Minutes for 30 June 2010 and Special Council Minutes for 1 July 2010 I thought I was reading the Back Page of Dem Tull. There were some amazing comments, the type I would be tempted to make in similar circumstances. I was amazed at reading quotes like "corruption", "used to advantage", "not being open and transparent". Those types of comments were in the minutes and appear to be the feelings of the majority of council while discussing an application for a new charter business to bring tourists to the island. Council is quite clear that those statements are not proven but to me it shows their feelings on the subject and according to the Governors Rep it mirrors the feelings of many in the community who have talked to her on this matter.

More tourism for Pitcairn is a good thing and no one would be against anyone who tries to make that happen. And competition is healthy. Council appears concerned over the business proposal. One of the parties was instrumental in negotiating the travel fares for the Claymore II, which costs an arm and a leg and few of us can afford to travel to Pitcairn on it. The majority of the community has never stopped complaining about the fares and Council have also asked for a review as well. According to minutes, when Council asked for a copy of the contract with Stoney Creek shipping (Claymore II), it was unavailable and I haven't heard if it is available now.

Thinking of myself as a potential client I tried to find out the cost of the fares for the new venture to compare with the fares on Claymore II to see who is cheapest, but have been unsuccessful so far. I believe however, that there may be discounts for ucklun but only for two fares and only if there are six full paying fares. I understand there are eight berths in total. No doubt we will be commenting further as things develop.

I was present at a presentation the then Commissioner Jacques gave at Auckland museum in 2007. I am fortunate to have a tape recording of his speech in which he said he aimed to provide regular and affordable shipping to Pitcairn so that grandchildren could regularly visit their grandparents just as families visit each other all over the world. Three things stand out for me from that statement that seems not to have achieved his aim: 1. Grandchildren are not automatically allowed to visit with their grandparents on Pitcairn, it is a case-by-case decision of each application. FCO officials like the teacher, the constable, the social worker and the doctor are not allowed to bring their children, as long as FCO consider Pitcairn "unsafe". 2. Three-monthly schedules are not frequent enough for families with regular jobs to visit here. 3. To most of ucklun it is not affordable, so we are hoping the new proposed venture has much, much, much cheaper fares.

Article 2.

In a recent issue of Miscellany the Community Police Officer wrote a short piece on petrol missing from the government and private fuel tanks down at the Landing. He said in some cases the fuel may have been replaced with water. "This is theft" he said and went on to advise that peoples' lives were put at risk "which is despiccable" he also said.

I was surprised to read that some members of council were disappointed with the article as they believe negative things about Pitcairn should not be published for all the world to read. Why not,- we are not perfect. No race or community is. Yes, we are few, and publishing anything negative has some impact but more so than theft and danger? I doubt it. Our readers read about this kind of events in their local paper every day. I agree with the Community Police Officers article. It is good to be put on notice especially if peoples' lives are put at risk and I too believe it is despiccable if such a thing is occurring. I know a large section of the community do discuss these things amongst them.

Along similar lines regarding missing goods but not necessarily stolen. Apparently in recent months there are five pallets of government cement unaccounted for. With approximately 50 bags of cement to one pallet, that is a lot of cement to go missing and for someone to hide if stolen. Perhaps it is time for the authorities to think of a better system of checking goods arriving on the island, as with the cement it is highly likely stock figures are wrong (my speculation) as we are a nosey lot and 250 bags of cement can't stay hidden for long on a small island. On the last supply ship I sent a small package of dangerous goods containing boxes of matches and flyspray. Being dangerous goods, Shuttle repacked my goods with others in a special "dangerous goods" box and sent it to Pitcairn with all the other dangerous goods. There is proof the goods were sent, but the goods are missing. I am not saying anyone stole the goods, just that maybe it should have been checked off manifests to ensure the goods are delivered to the right person, which in my case it wasn't. A box of t-shirts disappeared when unloading Picton Castle, but was later returned to the rightful owner. A package containing fishhooks and battery lamps, also arriving on the Picton Castle, disappeared from the cargo down The Landing and is still missing. As these are very recent events, perhaps this is an area where the authorities should give some attention, so that speculation of theft can hopefully go away.