



UCKLUN TULL UN DEM TULL

Pitcairn News

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Julie back in New Zealand tull. I apologise for the delay in sending out the February and March/April newsletters. I did write the February one a few days after arriving on Pitcairn but I wasn't able to convert the newsletter to a .pdf file and the data was too large for most Email Inboxes to send as a word document. As I was on holiday and enjoying myself I decided to take a holiday with the newsletter as well. So as you will have discovered you will be receiving two editions for February and March together. I have already written an article on Supply Ship day in previous issues but it was exciting for me to actually experience the 'new way' they do things now so the feature article on the front page is Supply Ship day, again. Leona Hermans, one of ucklun who live in Wellington has contributed an article on this years Bounty Day celebrations in Wellington, New Zealand and I hope she will write more articles about ucklun in Wellington for future editions of Pitcairn News.

Supply ship day Thursday, 6 March 2008 – Julie tull

The feature photo above, was taken from the edge overlooking Bounty Bay. It was 7.00 am with the rays of the rising sun shining over St Pauls Stone on such a beautiful, beautiful morning. Anchored not far from the wreck of HMAS Bounty were Tabora (inside) and Braveheart. Generally supply ships anchor in the lea of the island, usually on the western side but that day the seas were calm right outside Bounty Bay. They were unloading the containers so fast that the two boats would pass each other right outside the harbor going to and from the Tabora. On a couple of occasions, one boat had to wait outside while the other finished unloading. There were two tractors bringing the containers up to the edge where we were all waiting to unload them. Usually as one full container is dropped off an empty one is collected to take back out to the Tabora in the returning empty boat. But with the Tabora anchored so close the tractor drivers had to work overtime just getting the full containers off the jetty and up to the edge to make way for the next lot coming ashore, that they just dropped off a full container, turned around and went back for another.

Then there were ucklun at the edge. With the containers coming non stop we had little time to catch our breath before the next one was delivered. I soon realized why everyone is so fit on Pitcairn. You need to have the strength of Samson to lift some of the boxes out of the containers. Sometimes depending on circumstances like the weather, unloading could take all day or at least well into the afternoon. But that day the unloading was finished not long after 10.00 am. Apart from containers there were also 44 gallon drums of oil i.e. diesel and petrol and building materials to be brought up from the landing and delivered to the warehouse or private homes. The store people also had boxes and boxes to unpack and store away. And then there was the mail. So even though Tabora was off and away by late morning, some were busy for most of the day. Compared to the Blue Star container ships that used to be our supply ships, the Tabora is very small. Compared to the Braveheart, Tabora is very big. I travelled on the Braveheart which some would say, brave, but I enjoyed it. See the section Bits and Pieces.



The two longboats passing ea other



Timmy and Pauline unloading container



Tractor delivering container

BOUNTY DAY IN NEW ZEALAND – *Leona in Wellington, New Zealand tull*

The Pitcairn community in Wellington celebrated their 4th Bounty Day on Sunday, 20 January 2008 at the Darts Club Hall in Porirua. In mid-November a flyer was sent out advertising this important event in our history, inviting all to the "Pitcairn Gathering – Come Celebrate Bounty Day, 2008". As with the previous three celebrations, we had a good turnout with folk coming from far and wide - all keen to meet up again with old friends, reminisce about the 'olden days', eat Pitkern weckle¹, play sports and enjoy the music and dance at the end of the day. Believe it or not, Wellington turned on a 'perfect' day with hardly a breath of wind!



All participants, including Pitcairn's Governor, His Excellency George Fergusson and wife, Margaret were welcomed by Roger Clark, MC. Pastor Kendell Cobbin (old family friend of the Island) blessed the gathering and "**Bounty 2008**" got underway. A very realistic model, (many thought too good fe bun² made by Roger, took centre stage in the hall.



Over 50's ladies race – hard fe believe dem dar old, unnay?

Robert Head and his assistants did a great job of organising the sports - young and old participated enthusiastically. All age groups were catered for with old favourites such as three legged races, egg and spoon, bag race, etc., were enjoyed by everyone. Prizes were awarded to the 1st, 2nd & 3rd place getters.



There was a 'bouncy castle' for the littlies and a lolly scramble that included some real 'Bounty Bars'! To ensure our 'unna a coc'nut'³ skills are not forgotten we had four teams compete. Much encouragement and coaching were yelled out from the sideline to favourite teams. However, there was no overall winner, such was the competition! The

unna coc'nut was passed around for everyone to enjoy – the ⁴ onny thing messing was sum ripe plun!



Without exception, the most important and eagerly awaited event in the sports section was the tug-of-war – men v. women! The girls were keen to retain their title 'champions 2007'.



Encouragement from onlookers



Victorious Winners!

Looking at those burly men with bulging muscles (well, nearly), didn't exactly inspire confidence within the team but with determination and sheer female tenacity, there was no competition, piece of cake – the girls retained their title. Sorry guys, you have 9 months to get ready for 2009!

In the late afternoon, "**Bounty**" was brought outside for the burning. With a few buckets of water handy (a requirement by NZ Fire Department) an accelerant was poured over her and set alight. We gathered around and joined in singing "Sweet By and By" followed by Rosalind Amelia Young's "Goodbye Song". Meanwhile, in the hall in true Pitcairn style the long table was laden with 'sweet' weckle – pick fish, bake rice, corn beef, ⁵ pilau – china en a taty en much more! ⁶ No one tull "wunt dar fe Allen" cos summa ucklun musa get a buss bally!

To end an enjoyable day, Ruby and her band entertained everyone when young and old were invited to come on stage and sing their favourite song – most people were quite happy to sit and listen to the music – no doubt reminiscing about days of old, growing up orn Pitcairn and past Bounty days 'down the Landing' – ⁷ sanks yorley fe comen' en see you all again fe 'Bounty 2009'!



Bounty 2008

¹. Weckle = food. ². fe bun = to burn. ³. 'unna a coc'nut' = grate a coconut ⁴ onny thing messing was sum ripe plun! = the only thing missing was some ripe banana ⁵ pilau = a Pitcairn dish made into a type of pie from grated kumara (sweet potato), banana or pumpkin. ⁶. No one tull wunt dar fe Allen" cos summa ucklun musa get a buss bally = No one said there wasn't enough to eat because some of us had such a full belly (stomach) from eating too much. ⁷. Sanks yorley fe comen' en see you all again fe Bounty 2009 = Thanks everyone for coming and hope to see all of you again for Bounty 2009.



Pitcairn bees are disease free. We produce some of the tastiest and natural honey in the world. **Pipco** is our honey co-operative and after receiving a large order for honey, Pipco had a working bee day to gather and bottle honey. Some went of to collect the honey trays from the hives and others were in the public hall scraping off the bees wax and spinning the trays in the drum to remove the honey. I'm not sure who works harder, the bees or the humans.



Jeannie the new school teacher is certainly getting into the swing of things. She held an **open sports day** at school playing Pitcairn rounders where there were two teams made up of five year olds to the old. My fitness which was non existent improved a little as I huffed and puffed my way around the field chasing after the ball. I managed to score a run but the other team still won.



Ralph giving his Welcome speech



Mum Charlene batting



Sister Torika saying Thank you

Adrianna, Pitcairns first potential Olympic gymnast turned one on 3 March. She celebrated with a small party for family and friends at Big Fence. She missed blowing out her single candle when older brother Ryan, quick as a flash, beat her to the task. At 3 years old he knew exactly the right time to blow which was when we had finished singing happy birthday.



Double jointed, bendable Adrianna almost ready for bedtime

Ralph also celebrated his 11th birthday on 21 February with a public dinner at his home.

Christians café has had a building extension to cater for increased patronage. Olive's cooking is tasty and value for money so we went there every Friday night I was on Pitcairn including my last night when there were at least 50 guests who dined there. Their busiest night yet. The usual regulars were there and the leaving corrections officers had invited a good number as their guests and a few guests joined my table as well. A night of celebration and one to remember for a long time. Here is a collage of photos from the café from various nights including the last one.



BITS AND PIECES:

Public Work is our way of paying tax. Certain days are set aside when it is compulsory for all able bodied adults who are not retired and who live indefinitely on Pitcairn, to work for free. The Chairman of Internal Committee determines what work needs doing and allocates teams to do the tasks. In my younger days public work was compulsory for men only but there are no longer enough men to maintain the island. A notice must be published on the public notice board a few days prior to inform every one of the day and time to meet in the village square where we are allocated jobs. A reminder is also broadcasted on the VHF radio early in the morning. Ben and I weren't there indefinitely but we still went, most islanders visiting usually do. Armed with machetes we tagged along up to Aute Valley, where Dennis was on the tractor grading the roads with a team of women spraying the weeds with roundup and Ben and I with the machetes cutting branches of trees overhanging the roads. It was hot and thirsty work.

Thanks to the men in Bobs Valley **the new Doctors house** has been built and finished and our doctor has already moved in.

Pastor Ray held a **slide show evening on Easter Island** one Saturday night in the community hall. Some had expressed interest in seeing pictures of Easter Islands breakwater and foreshore and how they unload their supply ship which happened to be there at the same time as us.

March was changeover of corrections offices again and the **Braveheart arrived 6 March** 2008 with passengers, six new corrections officers, Kari Young returning from hospital in Papetee, Kathryn Barriball, social worker, Diane a friend from Norfolk Island and one other. **Departed 8 March** with six (old) corrections offices, Kathryn Barriball and me. **Arrived 13 March** with Governor Fergusson, Lynn McNair social worker returning for a 12 month term, two men from DFID, Grant Pearce from Tonkin & Taylor, and the temporary police officer. **Departed 15 March** with Governor Fergusson, two DFID, Pearce and Diane. The Braveheart is small compared to other ships I have travelled on to Pitcairn and we have heard some scary stories of rocking and rolling in bad weather but we were lucky we had reasonable weather going to Mangareva although we were still pleased to arrive in the calm of the lagoon at Mangareva just after midnight on Sunday night. Thank you to the crew, Matt, Tracey, Nick, Neil and Broughton for a safe and enjoyable journey.

The Bounty Bay yacht which takes tourists to Pitcairn, Henderson and Oeno left Managreva on 15 March with passengers who arrived on the same plane as Governor Fergusson.

Council Meeting: While on Pitcairn I attended my first council meeting and sat in the Public Gallery for the whole five hours. Island Council Meetings are open to the public except when they go into committee. Matters of interest discussed were:

1. **Breakwater project.** The first design was rejected by the islanders as being far more dangerous than Pitcairns current situation. A request for a new design following consultation was made. The 'new' design which was presented, again, in council was in fact the same design which was originally rejected and it appears the design may have been made within the limitations of funding which may not be sufficient to fund a SAFER option. An alternative suggestion which is to be discussed with Grant Pearce was to build a second harbor landing on the western side of the island. That creates other issues as the road going down to Tedside is worse than the Hill of Difficulty was and there are no other facilities on that side of the island.
2. **Windmills:** There are obstacles here as well. It appears the funding is only sufficient to buy the windmills and won't be enough to cover freight and installation costs which amounts are estimated to be considerable. There are other concerns that it appears it may be necessary to continue to run the diesel generators and the residents power bills based on current charging scales will become exorbitant. More discussions needed.
3. **Permanent jobs – any vacancy?** The men who were sentenced to prison held senior positions and the council members at the time voted that when they were released and on parole they would be given their jobs back. The governor overruled councils decision. The first man on parole has applied for a job and this problem will arise again soon as others are released. Previously, when someone held more than one position they were usually required to relinquish one in favour of an unemployed person, usually someone returning to live. Now it appears that should not be the case even though some may hold multiple positions, primarily as a result of the men being locked away. Pitcairn has no unemployment or sickness benefit. A problem to be discussed further.
4. **Shipping** is back on the agenda. The Braveheart is chartered to carry passengers because the Tapora is unable to. Discussions are being held for other ways to bring Pitcairns supplies and passengers at a reduced cost. There are already proposed possibilities but traveling internationally via domestic ports requires negotiations at high political level and this is ongoing.

Bits and Pieces continued:

A public meeting was held to discuss the **construction of a new store**. Apparently plans have already been drawn up and the materials are expected to arrive shortly but a site for the new store is yet to be agreed on.

The Pitcairn Development Team (PDT) consisting of Commissioner Leslie Jacques and five locals has been in operation for some months, and their task is to set up job descriptions and suggest changes in our local government system. Eventually there will also be changes in our Constitution of 1970, to conform to the projected move towards more self determination for all British overseas territories. PDT brings their proposals to Council, and if agreed upon, out to workshops to inform the public. **Pitcairns Commissioner is resident on Pitcairn for 12 months** to assist in these discussions and help us move forward towards self determination.

The Governor held a public dinner and public meeting in the short time he was there.

Leon Salt appeared in court, again recently regarding his employment case with the Governor and the Pitcairn Document case, also with the Governor. Will report more when the results are known.

Julie tull:

Following on from the article "Are we moving forward?" on the last page of Februarys edition, written a few days after I arrived on Pitcairn, some asked me in the last few days of my visit about my opinion of Pitcairn now that I have had the time to reflect properly. I apologise if some comments are similar to the February article but n reflection I believe Pitcairn still has a very big mountain to climb in many ways and not just socially but politically and economically as well.

On the social front it is obvious everyone is trying very, very hard to move forward and forget the happenings of the past few years. However there are definitely different groups or factions as we have been called and all of them appear to be trying very hard to be nice to each other. While the 'niceness' appears to be a genuine attempt by all I believe the 'trying too hard' is causing more stress than just letting life take its natural path. While there were many situations where many of us sat and chatted together, what I found unnatural was the lack of intense debate whether serious or in jest that used to be a big part of the community. Whether it was me or not, while we did joke, I felt some were on their guard most of the time trying hard not to cause offence. I missed the unholy, unpolitical jesting – the Pitcairn type humour that was everywhere before. Examples like miming the Queen, which would have created mirth before, were missing possibly because it may be viewed by some as criticism of the trials. I did find a general uneasiness amongst the genuine attempts to forgive and forget. Not withstanding all I have said I believe that after living together in a small community for such a long time there is still a natural fondness for each other and that in time this fondness and bond and the need we have for each other will one day prevail. It is happening, the community spirit and helpfulness amongst each other on supply ship day and the camaraderie amongst most at the café celebrating our farewell is proof enough.

Unfortunately I discovered that Government officials, including the Governor have made it clear they are not interested in hearing the word 'Trials'. They believe it is in the past, should not be discussed and should be forgotten. Only saints would be capable of forgetting and there are no saints on Pitcairn. Until the Governor addresses our genuine belief of abuse of process in the way the investigation and trials were conducted, peace will take a long time to come to Pitcairn. Since writing the February newsletter there has been more bad press about Pitcairn which is one of our main bugbears as you know. In the recent report on the cost of the trials the senior Detective Inspector is quoted as saying "it wouldn't have cost as much if the men had done the right thing and all pleaded guilty." More negative discussions followed the article. It is easy for some to say take no notice of the press reports, but it is hard to ignore them, especially when they are reporting comments made by people we know and by some who lived or live amongst us.

I did have a great time on Pitcairn and my stay was much too short. Ben loves it there and has stayed behind. He celebrated his 18th birthday on 31 March and had a great time. He loves going out to ships, fishing, burning copper, cutting firewood with chainsaws, grinding rust of machinery, using a machete, etc, etc, all of these things he wouldn't have done living in New Zealand.

Harts et fer now. Hopefully Aprils edition won't take as long to publish. Thanks fer all yorley who tull. Ef anybody wunta tull, tulla me orn julie@customcredit.co.nz

Hooray

