

UCKLUN TULL UN DEM TULL

# Pitcairn News

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Adamstown in the distance

*Julie in New Zealand tull* – Sadly we have another funeral to report. This month nadda ucklen leven orn Pitcairn *dade*. Thank you to Meralda who *tull* Vulas eulogy below and in church and to Kari who *tull* the piece on funerals on Pitcairn. We don't wish to be morbid but dying is a fact of life and different cultures have different ways of farewelling loved ones and we thought it may interest some on how we do funerals on Pitcairn. Also in this issue more of ucklun *tull*. Goodun. Sorry, there's not a lot of photos in this issue. There is too much news to tell and limited space.

## VULA VALMA YOUNG nee Warren 4.1.1928 – 6.10.2007

On 6<sup>th</sup> October 2007, at approximately 8:50 am, Vula Valma Young passed peacefully away. No more pain and suffering. She was the second child born to parents Maria & Wallace Warren. Her older brother, younger sister and younger Brother all live in New Zealand. She married Samuel Young on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1946 and had four children Pauline, Elsie (deceased), Brian and Terry and all of them live on Pitcairn. There are eight grand children but only Timothy was on Pitcairn with his special grandma in her final days. The other grandchildren and great grandchildren all live abroad. She was proud of them all.



Vula served her Island well over the years and at one stage was a temporary Nurse Aid in the small dispensary in the square and she served time as a councilor on the Island Council. Vula and Sammy took their family to NZ on several occasions. Sadly on one of those trips, in 1981 Sam passed away and she returned to Pitcairn with Terry to look after her ageing father. She was evacuated to Tahiti in 1984 for a life threatening appendix operation. In her younger and active days Vula loved to fish and fishing from the rocks down Isaacs was her passion even when she toppled of the rocks into the water suffering a broken wrist and had to be rescued.

She loved to weave and make her handcrafts. Her hands were always busy doing something. She 'hooked' beautiful handmade rugs, embroidered baskets and helped Toge sand his carvings. The wild beans she cooked for Brian and all the things she did this past year including being with Pauline who returned home, after 40 years away, to take care of her in her failing health. The day before she passed away she tried to print her basket but in frustration told Pauline she couldn't remember what to do. Great in the Kitchen she created many memorable dishes. Vula's Donuts will always be remembered. The children and Grandchildren will talk about Ma's weckle for a long time to come. Vula was a fighter and she fought for her life many times. She fought hard for her boys and for her family. She was determined and feisty. Her feelings and wishes were well known. A totally dedicated mum.

Another of Pitcairns great Sulluns se gorn to rest at the age of 79. Our hearts go out to her family. May you rest in peace.

Everything in this box **SARAH TULL:**

**BIRTHDAY GIRL:** Some of you may remember the famous **Emily Rose Christian** (pictured right with friend Torika at her party) so well known for being the first baby born on Pitcairn in 17 years. Well on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September she celebrated her fourth birthday. The party was held down Big Fence and was widely attended. Traditional Pitcairn weckle and more modern introductions graced the table and were followed by cakes, slices and ice cream for dessert. A great time was had by all, particularly Emily, who had a pile of pressies to take home and open. Happy Birthday Emily!!!!!!



**BOOK CLUB:** Another event of note and a first for Pitcairn was the beginning of a book club held fortnightly at the school. At the first meeting eight people attended including the schoolteacher, Susan. The first book is "Mister Pip" by Lloyd Jones and will be discussed at the next meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. I'll give you an update on the book club in next month's newsletter. This initiative is being funded under the GPI education budget, which pays for all the books.



**BIRTHDAY BOY:** On the 11<sup>th</sup> of October there was another birthday on the island. This time it was **Jayden Warren-Peu's** ninth birthday. Handwritten invitations were sent to every household. It was originally to be a fish fry down landing however due to a few showers during the day it was decided to play it safe and the party was held at Jayden's home. Happy Birthday Jayden!!!!

**A SHIP STOPPED:** On the 5<sup>th</sup> of October there was an event that is becoming steadily more rare, a ship stopped at Pitcairn. It stood about 2 miles offshore and the longboat went out to meet it. It was bringing some goods for the islanders and as always the opportunity to trade fruit and fish for other goods and an off-season (cruise ship time being the on-season) chance to make a bit of money selling t-shirts, postcards and curios. Also this ship carried several passengers, another sight that is becoming more rare on a container ship. They had traveled all the way from Europe. There were several nationalities including Dutch and American and at least one was heading home to NZ. Presumably belonging to one of these passengers was the mobile home sitting high atop the containers. The things you see when you haven't got a camera.

**MARY CROWLEY VISITS AGAIN:** Recently Pitcairn was visited by three Russian guests, members of a Pitcairn society in Russia. They all bore t-shirts proudly proclaiming that they were the first Russian expedition to Pitcairn. While they were here they visited the school and gave gifts to the children and a public dinner was held so they could present their gift to the island. It was an ornate samovar, a large urn-shaped metal container used to heat water decorated with the same logo that they had on their shirts.

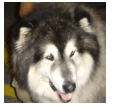
Six-year old school child, **BRADLEY CHRISTIAN TULL:**

"The Russians came to the school and they talked to us about their home. We sat in a circle and told them stories. I told them about my dolphin necklace and my tree house. They gave us Russian dolls and t-shirts"

**Janelle in Perth Australia tull:** Wuthing I bin doin? (*What have I been doing?*) Been living in Australia for about 11 years now. 10 of that in Melbourne with my fathers ex-wife and dems family. Have been working in the IT Department for a place called Nufarm (makes Round-Up) for close to 5 years now. Semathing (*Seems like*) all I do is work! At work I look after everyones computers, make sure everything is working alright and fix it up when they brek (*break*) it. Its good fun pulling them apart! About a year ago, Nufarm offered me a position in Perth being the sole support for our Western Australia, South Australia and Asian Offices. It was a good chance to go runabout and do some travel, so I packed up me and my cat and moved to Perth! (am getting further and further away from home....) Still living in Perth, and am planning my next trip home to Pitcairn in maybe 2008-09, will just have to wait and see... Hooray!

(*Janelle Brown is Lens granddaughter and her mum is Yvonne who lives in New Zealand. She arrived in NZ on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October for work and is coming to my home with Tania and family for Chinese takeawy meal tonight, Monday 15 October 2007 for a catch up.*)

**SIMBA WOOFED:** A special order was placed with Carols takeaways for fish balls, minus the curry and onions. Boiled goats meat is also on the menu. A dribble, a smell, a lick and a gulp and they were gone in a flash. Fussy eater Simba has become a fan of Pitcairn weckle. Another convert. Whats next. Pilhi?



**PUSSY (MARONA) IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND TULL:** While recently visiting with her daughter and grandchildren in Melbourne they said, come over and live with us. Pussy doesn't muck about. She called the real estate agent and put her house up for sale. Quick as a flash it sold. Settlement is on 2 November 2007 and on 9 November 2007 she takes off on Emirates for Melbourne with her granddaughter Krystle and a container full of furniture. I asked, what if you don't like it and wished you had stayed in New Zealand? She said I'll pack up my container and come back. Harts the Pitcairn spirit.

**JAY WARREN OUR MAYOR** has been flying here there and everywhere. He arrived in NZ on 7 September 2007 and flew off to Fiji on 10<sup>th</sup> September then onto Noumea from there for SPC meetings. He flew back into NZ on 26 September then took off again on 29 September, this time to USA to visit with his son Dean who lives there skippering Super Yachts. He returned to NZ on Tuesday 9 October was picked up from international terminal by a taxi driver waving a large plaque with "Jay Warren" written on it, transported to the domestic terminal and flew off same day to Wellington for a visit with the Governor. He flew back into Auckland same day. What a busy time he is having. He is not being idle while here. He attended the Pitcairn Admin office and was on the interview panel via video link with Pitcairn interviewing candidates for the job of Island Secretary. Next up is another return flight to Wellington on Tuesday, 16 October, for lunch then on 21 October he is off to Norfolk Island, returning on 25 October in time for a wedding on 2 November. He did decline a trip to Brussels in December to take part in discussions on the Breakwater project preferring to return to Pitcairn on Bravehearts next changeover at the end of November. His reason being, Pitcairn is short of able bodied men and he is needed on Pitcairn. If he doesn't leave in November the next available opportunity to go back will be on 3 February 2008.

**WHALE WATCHING:** A visitor to Pitcairn was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to count the number of whales seen from land. Apparently officials wanted to know the number and types of whales in our waters and how often they returned. I would have thought, no matter how qualified you are, it would be a little difficult to tell the difference from land and the frequency of their visits over a short period of time. But then I am not an expert at whale counting. I understand £5,000 was set aside from the DFID fund for this project. Lucky work permits on Pitcairn are not as hard to come by as in other countries. It's just a pity no local was considered qualified enough to count whales.

**MAIL STATISTICS** - In: 177 Out: 208

### **REFLECTIONS ON PITCAIRN FUNERALS - KARI TULL**

As soon as someone passes away, the community is alerted within minutes. A call is made on the public VHF channel 16 to confirm the death, and the men immediately divide up in groups - one group to dig the grave and the other group to make the coffin. This time the mechanical digger was broken which meant the grave had to be dug by hand with shovels and pics. Measurements of the deceased are checked in both cases to make sure it will fit. The women dress the deceased, make wreaths and arrange flowers to cover the body, the coffin and the graveside - Carol did a lovely job for Vula.

The bereaved family is not left alone for a minute, people are coming and going, expressing their condolences and sharing the grief, having a last look at their friend and neighbour, sitting down to talk about her life and her accomplishments. The ordinary routines are put on hold till after the funeral, the whole island has stopped in its tracks, there is nothing but the funeral preparations. After washing off the sawdust and dirt from their hard work, the appointed men appeared by the deceased's coffin to carry her to the church, while bellringer David let the church bell toll the appropriate number of chimes - 79 for Vula's years.

"In the Sweet Bye and Bye", Pitcairn's hymnal anthem, and "Safe in the arms of Jesus", accompanied by Pastor Ray's sermon and Meralda's eulogy, almost lifted the roof off the church with all the men from Bob's Valley attending as well as the men on home detention. There is no sweeter sound than the Pitcairn people singing their hearts out. The faithful pallbearers led the way down to the cemetery, where Vula was laid to rest, only nine hours after she was found dead in her sleep that same morning. Being so intensely involved in the preparations help the grieving process, and also the short time span from the death to the actual farewell at the funeral. After the burial ceremony at the graveside, everyone was invited to the nearby remand center in Bobs Valley for refreshments. There was cold and hot drinks, cakes and biscuits and snacks, the prison gate open and people coming and going - a wonderful and dignified wake for Vula.

## CHARTER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Consultation is still ongoing with Susan, the School Teacher and Kari going around visiting with individual families and answering their questions. The Tokelau Islands with a population of 1900 is going through a similar process although they are far more advanced than we are. After reading an article on the Tokelau in last weeks NZ Herald I had to smile when I read that the only complaints the NZ Officials have in dealing with the islanders is that there are no 'firebrands' on Tokelau which makes it hard to know their feelings. I doubt that is a complaint the British can say about us.

### JUSTICE:

1. The appeal hearing against conviction set down for 8 – 10 October was heard on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. There are still matters outstanding on the appeals so will not comment on the details until next month.
2. The Public Defender has filed submissions with the European Court in Strasbourg, France on behalf of **one** of the Pitcairn defendants. I understand a date in April 2008 has been set aside for the hearing. I don't have any other details to report, for now.

### IN A PUBLIC PLACE

Yet again there has been another setback to the healing and moving forward process.

It is common knowledge that the majority of the community held different views to Tom and Bettys sworn affidavits supporting the trials. This is a much talked about event that won't disappear overnight. What is not talked about often, although common knowledge amongst the Pitcairn community, was that an English permanent resident on Pitcairn was quoted in the written media and on television saying, "By Claire Harvey, The Weekend Australian Magazine, 4-5 Dec 2004 .....*if anything like this had happened to my child, it would be a murder trial, because I would have killed them, Lupton-Christian says....*". "By Kathy Marks, Good Weekend December 4, 2004 .....*if this happened in our street in UK, I'd be a vigilante. I find it quite horrific. I'd be up for murder if it happened to one of my girls....*"

His interview was shown on worldwide television including the BBC, CNN, Australian and New Zealand television, in fact according to Claire Harvey Pitcairn news during the trials were reported from Khazakastan to Bahrain. It is alleged Lupton-Christian said directly to Vulas face, *that if he had a gun he would blow the mens heads off.*

Vula suffered greatly in recent years and she never forgot or stopped talking about those two events. She made it quite clear that she did not want the three of them to attend her funeral. That was her wish and her right.

Pastor Ray conveyed the message to both families and one of them publicly announced their exclusion on the VHF radio but Tom Christian, a senior Elder in the Church, appearing proud to have achieved his aims, flanked by outside officials, attended both the church service and graveside service. Pastor was put in the unenviable position of having to announce in church **during** Vulas private service that the church itself was a public place and he had a right to be there. True. The church is a public place, so is the graveyard. But was it the right thing for him to do? Would a fair and caring person respect the last wishes of the deceased? We would like to think so. Did he attend the funeral out of respect for Vula and her living family or was it disrespect? Vulas views were widely known by everyone, including them. It was not necessary for Pastor to remind them, but he did. They knew they weren't welcomed at the funeral service or graveyard. We believe it wasn't Toms right to intrude and if he was trying to make a point it was an unfortunate time to do it. Fortunately Vulas family, while immensely upset, ignored him and Vula was laid to rest with dignity.

We hear often that we must forgive and forget and move forward. Of course it is what we all want but as we have read many times, the trials would change Pitcairn forever. It has and not just for the worse. The reason why we wrote this article is because we believe an important lesson must be learnt from this. Pitcairn has changed. We should no longer feel we HAVE to extend an invitation to someone because it is what we used to do, traditionally. Funerals are private family occasions and families should have the right to choose who they wish to celebrate their loved ones life with. Despite everything that has happened Pitcairn is in a good place now. The Pitkern humour is back. Fortunately there are only a small number in the community who constantly complains to officials and it would be better for all if they could accept the consequences of the choices they made and move forward or Pitcairn will keep on going backwards.

Harts all fer now. Ef any yorley wunt a tull email me on [julie@customcredit.co.nz](mailto:julie@customcredit.co.nz) Hooray

**An old Chinese proverb says** *"when you point your finger at someone, you point three back at yourself"*.