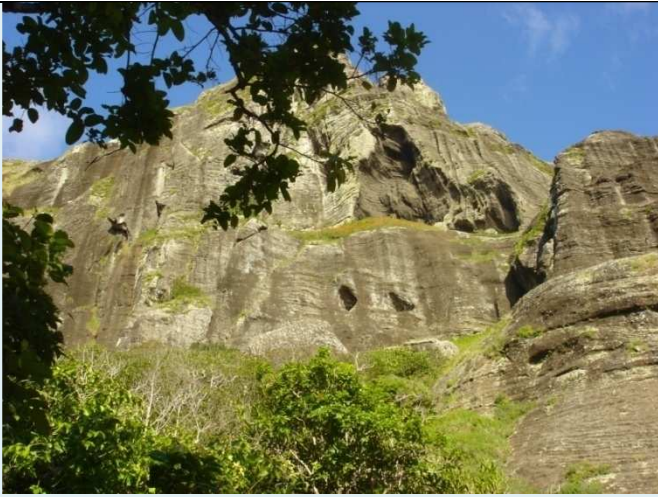


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Pitcairn News

Volume 2 No 8 August 2008



A VIEW OF CHRISTIANS CAVE

JULIE IN NEW ZEALAND TULL: Pitcairn passed another milestone in August. For the first time in Pitcairn's history, the Olympics came to our lounges on Pitcairn, live from Beijing, China. 31 August marked the end of winter and with the coming of spring the cruise ship season begins. The first cruise ship, Clipper Odyssey is due on 17 September so everyone has been busy getting all the winter annual jobs done, like sugar cane processing so that all spare time can be used for making souvenirs. A correction from July's edition. The Whale Bone pictured, for pricking holes in the thatch is called a "Pricker" and not "Stigger". I was unsure at the time and chose the nicer sounding option. Pitcairn is notorious for naming names like the pool named Ooaaoo. Not many photos this month always forgot the camera.

PUBLIC GAMES, HANGI and CHILDRENS BOOK LAUNCH



At Aute Valley our Corrections Officers arranged a **CRICKET MATCH** and a **TUG OF WAR** competition – a game where two teams pull on a rope in opposite directions. The centre of the rope is marked and positioned over a marker placed on the ground and the two teams are positioned either side of the marker. The successful team is the one who manages to pull the other team over onto their side in much the same way as arm wrestling. The two teams were islanders against non-islanders and the islanders won the tug of war. In my younger days it was usually Men against Women and the men didn't always win. The activities were enjoyed by all, some threw themselves into the game, others preferred to watch. In the evening everybody was invited to a **HANGI** at The Square. The meat had been prepared by our two guys in Bob's Valley, who could not take part in the event themselves. A very successful and popular event.

3 x PHOTOS BELOW ARE OF THE COMPETITION TUG OF WAR – MEN AGAINST WOMEN IN THE 1960'S. Photos by Pastor Cobbin



CULTURE TEACHER Meralda arranged a **BOOK LAUNCH** event in the Hall followed by a public dinner. "Mi Bast side orn Pitcairn" (My favourite place on Pitcairn) was written and illustrated by the six students in our primary and correspondence school at Pulau. Meralda and last year's teacher Susan had taken the initiative to inspire and encourage the kids to do research about their favourite place and then write about it, illustrated by their own drawings. Our Administration Office in Auckland had helped having it printed, and 500 copies arrived



in the mail last week. 67 of them were sold that first evening, with the authors' autographs.

FROM BENS DIARY (replaces Bits and Pieces for this month)

After much pressure from me Ben relented and kept a diary for Dem Tull which he started on Tuesday 12th August. He thinks things like how often he watched the Olympics or when he hangs out with friends like when David brought down an icecream on a stick or when he visited Timmy's and watched DVD's until 2.30 in the morning and daily chores like burning the copper, is boring so he left out those happenings. There are no paid jobs for Ben so in that sense he is unemployed. He leaves Pitcairn on the Braveheart on 27 September 2008 to return to New Zealand to further his education. Eight months on Pitcairn has given Ben another insight on life and he now knows my culture and where I grew up. He loves it on Pitcairn and hope to go back from time to time especially to visit Oeno and Henderson. In 1992 when he was 32 months old we visited Oeno but he can't remember anything about it. His daily emails were so brief it was like texting speak. I didn't correct obvious errors like Me and so and so.

Tuesday 12th August 2008 - Nothing happened at all today, it just rained and Dennis went to work. The two mens VIDEO LINK WITH THE PAROLE BOARD is tonight. (See Bobs Valley news). **Wednesday 13th** - Nothing happened today just worked on Curios (souvenirs) until the afternoon, then went and picked oranges. Just finished eating takeaways for dinner. **Thursday 14th** - Went to the store. Walked up to highest point then out to ships landing point. Watched the Olympics and Corney Swanepoles swimming semi finals. **Friday 15th** - Went to Christians café for dinner. **Saturday 16th** - Did nothing on Saturday.

Sunday 17th - Went down to VISIT THE TWO INMATES IN BOBS VALLEY then me and Dennis, Steve and Olive did road works. Went down the landing for FISH FRY at 5:30 pm. **Monday 18th** - Did PUBLIC WORK - associated jobs. Afterwards Me, Dennis and Nana went down to Tedside to do some fishing. We caught 3 rock fish each. Went down to MAVIS FOR HER BIRTHDAY PARTY DINNER. **Tuesday 19th** - Nothing much been happening just Council PDT meeting today. Engineers working on Longboat - Tin. Me and Timmy went down the landing when they launched the boat into the harbor for testing. **Wednesday 20th** - Worked on Dennis new workshop till 11:30 am. Engineers finished working on Longboat Tin. Weather wasn't that good but we took the two longboats Tin and Moss to TRAWL FOR FISH. I caught 1 yellowtail (Tuna), David caught a yellow tail and an Amberjack, Dennis and Jay caught one cuta (Wahoo) each. Had burger takeaways for dinner. (*Pitcairn has the best fishing in the world, the freshest fish and Ben had burgers for dinner!!!*).

Thursday 21st - BRAVEHEART ARRIVED DIRECT FROM NEW ZEALAND, no passengers but brought sausages, mince, KFC, chops etc which we had ordered. Went DIVING OUT TO THE WRECK OF THE BOUNTY with Tim and saw a whale and a turtle. Went to Browns Bakery. Went up to NADINES FOR DINNER. **Friday 22nd** - Went up to Flatland and PLAYED SOCCER - Me, David, Faiyaz and Daryl (Corrections), Turi and Daralyn, Ralph and Jayden, Ariel and Sarah. Went to Big Fence café for dinner.

Saturday 23rd - Sabbath so did nothing (*he means work*). Went down rope with Dennis and up to Garnets Ridge. 5.00 pm Sheri and Andy, School Teacher and Pauline DEPARTED ON THE BRAVEHEART for Mangareva. Some of us went up to Timmy's for dinner. (*Down rope is our only beach and is where the famous hieroglyphs are carved into the cliff face. Access is via a steep climb down an almost vertical cliff face*).



Sunday 24th - Early morning went out to the SHIP TAMPA TO SEE TIMMY AND SARAH OFF. VISITED BOBS VALLEY from 1 - 2 pm. Dennis was working on the batteries for the Bikes and Cookie came down to help. *After the disappointment of missing out on a ship last month, Timmy and Sarah finally left for a new start in Australia. The Wilhelmsen ship, Tampa, stopped by as arranged to pick them up. A ship stopping is a rare occasion these days and it was good to be able to visit this old friend.*

Monday 25th - PUBLIC MEETING from 8:30am - 11:15am. At 5.30 pm Meralda had public dinner in the hall and launched the Childrens book "My best side on Pitcairn". **Tuesday 26th** - Mowed Pastors Lawn from 9am - 12. Painted Dennis's workshop. Had sausages for dinner. **Wednesday 27th** - Ship came randomly this morning and stayed for about an hour. Me and Dennis did the water tables for the landing. Worked on Dennis workshop. Walked up to ships landing point. Had takeaways for dinner. *Water Tables are the drains along the concrete road. They clear them of leaves and debris to stop them clogging up and overflowing when it rains.*

Thursday 28th - Mowed lawns behind church. Went out to BRAVEHEART WHICH ARRIVED with Pastor and Ann, Ginny (Deputy Governor), the new Doctor and his wife, 4 new corrections officers and the policeman's wife. Went for a walk up to highest point then to ships landing point. **Friday 29th** - Went up to Flatland to play soccer. FAREWELL LUNCH FOR DR MAD (MADELINE WILCOX) at 3pm in the public hall. Went to Big Fence (café) for dinner.

Saturday 30th - Faiyaz (corrections officer) came down to get some passionfruit. Did nothing for rest of day. Went down to the landing to see everyone off on the Braveheart. Weather was bad. LEAVING ON THE BRAVEHEART TODAY, Five Corrections officers, Dr Mad and husband, Deputy Governor, Charlene and Jayden and Commissioner Lesley Jaques. **Sunday 31st** - Went up to get two loads of firewood. Went down to VISIT BOBS VALLEY. Came home and had pies for dinner.

BOBS VALLEY NEWS

As reported last month, at 3pm Friday 11 July 2008 one of the three remaining inmates came home on Home Detention (HD), a couple of months late. On Sunday, 10 August 2008 there were two more hearings before the Parole Board, first was an application for parole by the person granted HD on 11 July and the second was an application for HD by one of the two remaining inmates. On 15 August the one already on HD was told his application for parole had been denied. Then on the evening of Monday, 18 August 2008 he received an email advising that Parole would be granted at 4pm on Friday 22 August 2008.

The application for HD by one of the two remaining inmates was granted on Wednesday, 20 August 2008.

That leaves one solitary inmate **IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT** in prison on Pitcairn Island, an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain whose Head of State is the Queen of England represented by the British High Commissioner to New Zealand whose Pitcairn title is Governor. Our very own Rudolph Hess. We should change the name of Bobs Valley to Spandau. There has been much discussion about the fate of Bobs Valley when it becomes vacant, it could be tourist accommodation, the new store, tea rooms but let us hope it doesn't suffer the same fate as Spandau which was destroyed to stop it from becoming a shrine.

I Googled 'solitary confinement' on the internet and there were thousands of sites on the subject. I have chosen to quote from 'The Nuffield Foundation' website, a British charitable trust whose trustees consist of a Baroness, a Dr, a Lord and four Professors one of whom, in the 2007 British Honours list, was awarded a CBE for services to Public Law in the field of Administrative Justice.

I quote from their websiteIn a document dated "Monday 13 November 2006 titled Access to Justice, Solitary Confinement.....*With the exception of the death penalty, solitary confinement is the most extreme penal practice legally imposed on prisoners. It was first widely and systematically used on both sides of the Atlantic in the 19th century as a tool for reforming prisoners, (references are quoted) ...but abandoned when it transpired that rather than being reformed, a large proportion of prisoners became mentally ill..... The assertion that solitary confinement profoundly affects the human mind is endorsed by many health professionals and monitoring bodies. Studies indicate that it may lead not only to mental illness, but also directly contribute to increased violence, thus turning some prisoners into the dangerous individuals they were claimed to be all along....*" This is a one and a half page article which references other sources including United Nations covenants, treaties etc.

With the rotation of corrections officers occurring every three months, the latest changeover occurred on 28th August 2008 which meant he started his solitary confinement with four total strangers who, because he is only one, are rostered to guard him one at a time, i.e. alone, singularly. Two of them are women who during their rosters will be alone, one at a time with the prisoner. He said, she said, and the judges believed she, was a huge part of the complaints surrounding the Pitcairn trials. On 16 March 2003 just prior to the time charges were laid against our men, a new ordinance was posted on the Pitcairn Notice board stating the victims evidence do not need to be corroborated. How dare the authorities place a prisoner in such a potentially compromising situation especially when there was a situation last year with a female corrections officer complaining, but it came to nothing. Any complaint by one of the alone male or female corrections officers will not need to be corroborated, Pitcairn law says so. At every changeover there are changes, different rules and different personalities. You never know what the changes will be until they happen. And the personalities of the guards over the last two years have been very different. There have been some mini Hitlers and some not.

Our Rudolph Hess has nobody to talk to except at weekend visits, and no work projects. Luckily he got a TV to stare at plus the barbed wire and banana trees separating his compound from the rest of Adamstown. He is locked in his cell from 8pm to 7am. As the five men were downgraded to category D in July 2007, assessed as no threat and minimum security, yet this prisoner is under punishment defined as cruel even for dangerous, disruptive and violent prisoners – double punishment in our eyes.

According to the New Zealand judged in the Pitcairn courts, we do not have any Human Rights. Amnesty International and the United Nations – WE NEED YOUR HELP.

THE OLYMPICS

The Olympics came to Pitcairn live from Beijing China for the first time ever. We now have three television channels in CNN News, TCM movie channel and cartoons in French. Whenever there are major sporting events like Football, Rugby, Olympics etc and there is enough consensus amongst the community we are able to request a channel change. So during the Olympics, TCM went and Euro Sport came. Because the channels are provided via French Polynesia the sports commentary was in French. As sport is an international language you do not need to know French or English to be able to follow the competitions. My interest is in water sports like swimming, waterpolo, yachting, rowing, etc. I understand coverage viewed on Pitcairn was much better than coverage provided by New Zealand.

KARI YOUNG tull about the vessel PYRENEES

(temporarily while Historian Timothy is travelling)

A very short note in British news reports regarding Pitcairn from the turn of the last century says: *“The **“PYRENEES”** was on fire and off Pitcairn Island and signaled for assistance. Mr J R McCoy boarded her and himself piloted her into the harbour of Mangareva where she was carefully beached. She is now being refloated.”*

One can only imagine the drama and excitement around this incident. Old Maynard, who died 20 years ago, remembered well the vessel "Pyrenees" from when he was a young boy, and the American author Jack London heard about the rescue operation which inspired him to write a short story called "The Seed of McCoy", which is available in several sites online. The "Pyrenees" had a fire in its cargo of wheat, and the captain hoped to beach her on Pitcairn and put out the fire. James Russell McCoy boarded her and said that Pitcairn got no beach, but he would take them to Mangareva (300 miles away to the northeast), where there were lots of beaches inside the lagoon. And so he did. In London's book he appears as quite the hero, and we on Pitcairn are justly proud of him.

The "Pyrenees" was refloated and served on the seven seas until she was sunk during WWI in 1914.

McCoy was magistrate for several years, and travelled a lot to Mangareva and Tahiti on various trading schooners. He talked the British consul in Tahiti into helping finance a schooner for Pitcairners to trade in French Polynesia, the "John Adams", but it proved to be in poor condition, so they had to sell it at a loss. They managed to pay the British back, and then built their own trading schooner, the "Messenger", captained by George Warren (son of Samuel) which didn't last long either, but sank in a storm off Pitcairn.

I TULL ON THAT BOOK – ON WORK, WORK PERMITS AND IMMIGRATION.

In *that* book, Marks appears to criticize, in fact I believe she is quite scathing, of the way paid jobs are allocated on Pitcairn. It appears she believes a newcomer with qualifications who arrive on the Island should boot a local out of a job and be given that job.

I quote: *“When xxxxx arrived for an extended visit, she was promptly given two positions: museum keeper and librarian. Xxxxx Xxxxx, the English newcomer, who had a horticulture degree and wanted to work in biosecurity, was made garbage collector. That had been the job of Hxxxxx Rxxx, the German settler. His wife, Nxxxxx Lxxxxx, had been gardener of the cemetery”.*

While Marks writes that our system is medieval, nevertheless we do have some kind of a system. In fact Marks needed a visa to go to Pitcairn. Funny that. There are very few jobs on Pitcairn and many jobs pay very little. I understand the current pay for the job of museum keeper is \$NZ35 per month. So like other countries including from where Ms Marks hail from, we have work visa rules. Should we let British and German citizens descend on Pitcairn and take over jobs from Pitcairn citizens? I believe not.

Pitcairn's current employment rules for Citizens is they are not entitled to apply for paid jobs unless they are there to reside INDEFINITELY. I actually agree with this. With the few positions available on Pitcairn it means there are seldom any vacancies and giving a job for a new arrival usually mean someone else having to relinquish one of theirs and even though some have more than one job when some positions pay only \$35 per month losing any position makes a huge difference. In *that* book the xxxxx returning for an extended visit was a Pitcairn citizen. Should the English newcomer be given the only vacant positions of Museum keeper and librarian over her? As part of Pitcairn's immigration policy the newcomers would have had to prove they have funds to support them. Another example, school teachers who are paid according to 'outside' pay scales and receive considerable additional benefits are permitted to learn how to carve curios but they are not permitted to sell them on cruise ships in competition with locals. The British Citizen she referred to is now a permanent resident and now holds a number of responsible jobs including biosecurity which I doubt such a job existed when he first came to Pitcairn in 1990. Anyway when he first came to Pitcairn and stayed for a few months he was a visitor and was not permitted to work. The German citizens couldn't hack the life and left.

Anyone, British, Germans, whoever, applying to go to Pitcairn as part of their visa approvals would be given the full details of employment or lack thereof and they have no right to criticize. Pitcairn and Pitcairners have many friends who have visited for extended stays on Pitcairn. Some 'outsiders' come and leave disenchanting. Others come and stay. Life on Pitcairn is not easy, it is not one of sitting under palm trees sipping pina colodas. If you want hot water to bathe in you need to get your own firewood and burn your own copper. That is hard work. Many immigrants the world over, return to the homes of their birth mainly for family reasons. It annoys me greatly when 'outsiders' especially journalists complain and blame us for policies which are not that much different to that in most countries where it isn't uncommon to find Doctors and Scientists driving taxis.

A SUPPORTERS EMAIL

While I have published the emails criticizing some of my articles I have not published any of the many emails I receive in support. Many friends send support but here is a much appreciated extract from a strangers email: *"My name is xxxxxxxx and I live in xxxxxx. I have been reading (actually read all) the issues of your newsletter. I've also followed the news stories... I should mention up front that I have no professional interest in this, am not a reporter, etc., but the Bounty/Pitcairn story has fascinated me ever since I was a kid.....The whole thing, if objectively analyzed, comes down to a question of cultural practices, which vary across the world, a point with which no one would argue. Here, in your case, the men have been singled out and held to a standard that has been, essentially, retroactively applied. As I noted earlier, there is a great deal of complexity here, and I obviously cannot present the whole argument here, nor do you need to hear it from me, but I have to wonder - all of these people who are so appalled and outraged: would they care to stand up in the middle of a public square in a town in, say, Saudi Arabia (eminently valued close ally of Britain and America) and start applying our cherished rules and laws there? Ms. Marks, for one, should try it, but somehow I don't think she will, because I doubt that she would return from the experiment alive. In fact, closer to home, she probably wouldn't last long playing her judgemental game right here xxxxxxxx.... Hang in there, Julie, and all you Pitkerners!"* Thank you Robert and all of our supporters out there.

THE BACK PAGE

In Junes edition I wrote about the need for expert advice to assist Council as we are in the midst of policy making in all areas of Government. My opinion hasn't changed. As reported last month we are right bang in the middle of an explosion of policy making and in one of the published letters to me I was asked not to turn this newsletter into a political newsletter. The section 'Back Page' has always been about politics and/or issues not published elsewhere. For Pitcairn News to ignore these major happenings would leave a sanitized version of news which was not my intention when I started this free newsletter. While we do not have political parties like Democrats and Republicans who spar with each other in parliament and call each other names we do have our own type of politics and our own type of sparing. This is not a criticism. It is great to know that after having a mountain of laws and policy changes imposed on Pitcairn without consultation, that there is now a system where there is consultation between a group of people who are prepared to debate the proposals and that council isn't just automatically ticking off each document presented to them by PDT.

There are several policy-writing groups, and most people are involved in several weekly meetings. PDT members are paid \$10 an hour, while the Social Development policy group, the Store Policy group, the Human Rights group are paid nothing at all. Council members are paid \$10 for each Council meeting. What happened to the concept of Equal Pay for Equal work?

While we are well aware that Pitcairn is nine years behind everyone else in implementing the requirements of the 1999 UN White Paper for self determination and that London is anxious for results, the changes to the structure of Government of Pitcairn Island (GPI) contained in the GPI Governance Restructure Document, nicknamed Christmas Tree, is way too important to be rushed. It is not our fault we are so far behind everyone else. Anyway, the Commissioner left on the Braveheart on 30 August 2008. A Special Council/PDT meeting on 29 August rushed through some changes to enable him to take away the restructure document to present to London. It is still an evolving document, as some jobs will have to be merged and other issues sorted out. Will report further as results evolve.

UPDATE ON THE VARIOUS PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

Breakwater at Bounty Bay or alternative harbor (Western side), Windmills, New Store, Completing concreting the main road to Pulau. In Februarys Council Meeting, we were running out of time to use the funding allocation for some of these projects which needed to be used this year. Nothing new to report.

Good News

1. Another project is being developed – widening the jetty at Bounty Bay.
2. It was announced Mangareva is now an international port, which would facilitate Pitcairn shipping, and direct passenger service to and from New Zealand, which in the last couple of years have been too costly and complicated involving international flights

Fingers crossed, one or any of these projects will start soon or come to pass, especially shipping.

In recent times I understand the Commissioner attended about 80 various meetings on behalf of Pitcairn with I understand various committees in London, South Pacific, etc. Council has requested on a number of occasions, reports from those meetings but I have been unable to find any record of those reports being tabled in Council. In one of those meetings from information obtained from the Falklands Islands website the following question was asked of the three representatives of Falklands, St Helena and Pitcairn – Q28 Chairman: *How would you characterize your relationships with your respective Governors? That is a difficult question for a man from the Pitcairn Islands, so I put it to the other two.* (WHY IS THAT?) Q29 Chairman: *.....I have a general question about the Overseas Territories Consultative Council, which you are attending next week.....* Q30 Chairman: *(To Leslie Jaques) You are in a rather unusual position, because you are a Foreign and Commonwealth Office appointee, but you also represent an overseas territory at the consultative council.* Q31 Chairman: *How widely known is the relationship between overseas territories and the consultative council among Pitcairners? As part of Jaques answer he saidCommunication between the Foreign Office, the Governor's office, our office and the Pitcairn Island Council and community has improved massively-it is probably better than it has ever been.."* The general community didn't know about those meetings. Most of us only learnt of his presence at this meeting when Google googled us about this report which are actually minutes and which Falklands had published on their government website. I for one haven't got a clue about the relationship between overseas territories and the consultative council (and the significance) and neither has many others I have spoken to.