

Pitcairn News

Sunrise behind St Paul's seen from Bounty Bay
(courtesy of visitor Tony Probst)

Volume 5 No 11

November 2011

KARI orn Pitcairn TULL:

Another dry month and the government has taken the dry situation seriously and sent one desalinator to the island, so we can make freshwater out of salt seawater. The desalinator came up on the supply ship "Claymore II" in the middle of the month, with containers of cargo and mail. Plus all our Christmas goodies, which will be stored in freezers, fridges and in cupboards for a month and a half till Santa officially arrives. The General Store has once again shelves full of temptations, and won't be full for long.

Very little gardening has been accomplished with the dry conditions, but we are hoping that the summer fruits – melons and pineapples – will survive the merciless sun and *fill awas (our) bellies*.

A Norwegian charter group of 11 arrived on the first Claymore II rotation, and kept the island busy and buzzing with activities for ten days and nights. All the cafes were open to full capacity, several public events, like Kimiora's birthday, fishing trip and fish fries, delighted the visitors, who left on the 3rd December. We will report from their visit in December issue.

The Sea Scouts are meeting every Wednesday afternoon for their training, led by New Zealand police constable Russ. They also had a "survival" weekend down Tedside this month, where their survival skills were put to the test – a challenging experience.

Several Pitcairners will return for the holidays. Julie (Dem Tull co-editor), Pearl and grandson Johnny will spend Christmas here with relatives. Darralyn who has graduated from her studies as an Enrolled Nurse will return as well as husband Turi who went to New Zealand to be with her since June and Steve and Olive following Steves operation on both of his hands in Tahiti. And our new Governor's Representative and partner will also arrive on this rotation.

THE BOUNTY BIBLE

A petition signed by many Pitkerners was submitted to Council regarding having the old Bounty Bible returned to the church for display there. The Bible was in a locked glass case in the church from 1950 until it was transferred to the museum. Council agreed to the return of the Bible to the church, where it will be more accessible to the public. The museum is generally open only when tourists come to the island, while the church is open all the time.

=====

DUNCAN VIEWS



There are still a lot of the old longdrop duncans left on Pitcairn, and they certainly have their charm. One of the charms is the marvellous view some of them have, - with the door open you can admire the Pacific Ocean and its moods, wild chicken chirping and clucking, the swaying coconuts and even ships passing or anchored off the island. The flush toilets don't offer much entertainment or view, maybe an emergency library if you are lucky. This view is from Simon and Shirley's duncan out Pulau, looking out to Belty and Isaac's on the northern coast with "Claymore" anchored off Bounty Bay.

BURNING OF STAMPS

Once in a while postmaster Dennis, according to policy and tradition, has to burn unsold stamp issues after being on sale for a certain period of time, and has a great bonfire to destroy First Day Covers and mint stamps. Thousands of dollars' worth of stamps go up in smoke, and the ceremony always attracts the locals who stand around and sigh at the waste of it all.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

On the 11th November we celebrated Remembrance Day in The Square. The seven Sea Scouts lined up in their uniforms. They laid down individual and shared wreaths at the Bounty Anchor, which ended up in a mass of flowers - a very colourful display.



Second picture (left) shows Len and his great grand daughter Isabel, the oldest and the youngest members of the community, after laying down their wreath.

Sea Scouts doing their part at the ceremony, looking very respectful of the occasion and laying down wreaths at the anchor. Well done, kids!!



From the benches where the community members were observing the ceremony.

THE DEM TULL HALL OF FAME: CAPTAIN F. W. BEECHEY

TIMOTHY YOUNG TULL (big.tim.tull@gmail.com)



(Photo) Frederick William Beechey, painted by his brother, George Duncan Beechey

To say that there are ship captains who have had an impact on Pitcairn is like saying that there is dishonesty in politics. All through the years there have been captains who in various ways have left their mark on Pitcairn, both good and bad. For the final Hall of Fame induction this year Dem Tull wishes to pay tribute to one of the early captains to visit the Pitcairn community, Frederick William Beechey.

Frederick William Beechey was born in London on February 17th, 1796. He was the son of Sir William Beechey, an accomplished portrait painter among whose successes was as the portrait painter to Queen Charlotte. His mother was Phyllis Ann Jessup.

The young Beechey learned artistry from his family at a young age, but at the age of ten he joined the Royal Navy and was soon a midshipman. He was already a good artist, and in the navy he became a talented draftsman. Of note in his career was his participation in the attack on New Orleans in January 1815 against the Americans, after which he was promoted to lieutenant.

In 1818, Beechey was appointed as second-in-command and chief draughtsman on the brig Trent under Lieutenant John Franklin in their attempts to locate the elusive Northwest Passage. Eventually (in 1843) his narrative of this trip, *"A voyage of discovery towards the North Pole was printed. Following this there were more missions in the interest of exploration and cartography, and on one of these missions, on January 25th, 1822 he was promoted to the rank of commander.*

Beechey was appointed commander of the H.M.S. Blossom in 1825, the purpose of which was primarily exploration, mostly in the Pacific Ocean. Also on the voyage, in the capacity of midshipman was his younger brother, Richard. Soon after entering the Pacific, Beechey came across Ducie Island, then following that, Henderson Island, and finally at 1 o'clock in the afternoon of December 4th, 1825, they sighted Pitcairn Island.

What followed the arrival on Pitcairn was a visit whose memory lasted for many years to come. Beechey and his crew mingled with the Pitcairners, which still included the venerable mutineer John Adams, who willingly spoke of the history of the Bounty and Pitcairn to Beechey as well as several others who have written accounts. Beechey also had the island mapped for the first time since Carteret, which was a definite improvement. This map was still in use on most ships until the latter years of the 20th century, and is still in use by some. What followed from the visit was a wealth of written information on Pitcairn Island, its culture, its history and its people. Not just from Beechey, but from many other members of his crew. His brother Richard contributed by painting several paintings of Pitcairn which are still around today. After a long visit of over a fortnight, the Blossom weighed anchor on December 21st and sailed off towards Polynesia.

After briefly stopping at Oeno, the Blossom continued on her voyage. During this voyage, Beechey was finally promoted to the rank of captain. The expedition finally concluded when they reached England in September, 1828. Beechey's published account, Narrative of a voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Strait was printed in 1831 and was a success. He also married his fiancée, Charlotte Stapleton in December, 1828, with whom he eventually had five daughters."

In the following years, Beechey conducted more surveys and in 1854 he was promoted to Rear-Admiral. In 1855 he was elected President of the Royal Geographical Society. Frederick William Beechey passed away on November 29th, 1856 in London. He was sixty years old.

Beechey contributed a great deal to the knowledge of the world at large with the various expeditions he was on, but with regards to Pitcairn his contribution to the preservation of much history and information on the early community on the island is what many will primarily remember him for. Although a great deal of the Blossom's crew also share in this credit, it was under Beechey's leadership that this visit came about, and his book, which included a sizeable portion dedicated to Pitcairn influenced and inspired many future generations, including this particular author.

Primarily I wish to give credit to Beechey's impressive book "Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beerings Strait, to co-operate with the polar expeditions performed in His Majesty's ship Blossom, under the command of Captain F.W. Beechey, R.N., F.R.S. &c. in the years 1825, 26, 27, 28."

Another good resource is the account by Lieutenant George Peard of the Blossom, "To the Pacific and Arctic with Beechey, the journal of Lieutenant George Peard of H.M.S. Blossom 1825-1828." There are other accounts by various members of the crew, some of them unpublished (at least to my knowledge).

For some of the background information on Beechey not included in the beginning of Peard's book, I used from: http://biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?id_nbr=3773.

RECOGNISE THE FLOWERS? (Answers on the last page)

1)



2)



3)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kari, from what I have understood about your local government, I have been reminded of the words by Jose Ortega y Gasset, Spain: THE REVOLT OF THE MASSES:
"THE CONSEQUENCES OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN A WORLD LARGELY COMPRISED OF SEMICIVILISED PEOPLE, LED BY SUPERFICIALLY EDUCATED DEMAGOGUES, WILL INEVITABLY BE A GENERAL LOWERING OF POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND MORAL STANDARDS".
Hoping for better days for Pitcairn!!!! - Gerard, Zuerich, Switzerland

Back issues of Dem Tull can be found on:

www.demtullpitcairn.com

THE BACK PAGE

Dem Tull has received lots of comments, advice and questions after the death of community member Terry Young (Dem Tull May 2011), and Terry's family informs that they have not received or seen the final report from the Debriefing Committee (consisting of medical staff, the community DM, the mayor, the Governor's Rep, the policeman among others), nor has the Governor's Office responded when asked who was actually responsible for outdated and missing medication at the Health Center – seemingly nobody. The family has been assured that things are now in place for the future, that steps have been taken to ensure there are adequate handovers and regular checks on outdated drugs. The Community DM as the ultimate head of the Health Center checks that everything is to her satisfaction. The fact that there is now a system in place for sick and dying people does not alter the fact that until Terry died, the system was not in place, and contributed to his death.

At Council meeting 26th October there was some uncertainty about the facts when someone asked about the progress of the Search and Rescue (SAR) policy, which had been under development since May. In Council meeting 9th November the SAR policy was declared finished and operative, with a list of gear and equipment to be developed. A new and revised Medivac procedure has recently been set up, too. In the past most medivacs were to New Zealand, as ships were plentiful, and always responded when emergency calls went out on the radio. In these digital days there is no general call on the radio for help, - though there are ships out there, they are not coming close to Pitcairn like before, and we have no means of contacting them collectively or even one by one. The new medivac procedure gives no indication how a vessel is to be procured for the medivac, so we are not much better off than before. The American Coast Guard system AMVER keeps track of all ships subscribing to their system by submitting daily positions to their headquarters, and AMVER knows at all times where all the ships are and is able to contact any of them. A system like that would be of immense help to remote locations like Pitcairn in emergency situations..

NOMINATION: Four candidates are on the list for the office of Deputy Mayor for the next two years – Simon (the present Deputy Mayor), Brenda (present Council member), Dave (present Council member) and Jacqui. Eight candidates are on the list for offices of five Councillors for the next two years: Jay, Brenda, Lea, Dave (all four present Councillors), Michele, Kerry, Melva and Jacqui. Election will be morning of 12th December.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes from 9th December revealed that the Post Office sales for October amounted to \$227.00, which represents only a fraction of the running costs of the Post Office and its three employees, who has very little to do these days, according to Council minutes. Gone are the days when ships would call in several times a month to pick up mail. The only ship picking up mail for us now is the "Claymore II" four times a year. Another issue for the post office is the increase in postal rates, which are now on par with New Zealand rates, but DFID's plan is to slap on another 20%, which Council is still protesting.

The four Division Managers submitted their draft budgets for April 2012-March 2013 to Council on 23rd November

Wind Power.

In Council minutes of 23 November 2011 the *"Govrep advised that Crown Agents had not put the wind power project out to tender as planned and that consequently the project would now be further delayed until 2013. This will impact on the five year plan in areas like tourism and immigration. This further delay was met with considerable disappointment by Council."*

Answers to flowers:

- 1) Despite many enquires we have not found out the name. A challenge – if anyone knows please advise and we will publish next month.
- 2) big monkeypuzzle tree in Aute Valley
- 3) white and red poinsettia trees

Harts et. Ef any yorley wunta tull, tulla us orn julie@customcredit.co.nz ulla Kari at uptibi@hotmail.com
Hooray