

# "TITOKI"

## BOUTIQUE ACCOMMODATION

Newsletter  
November/December 2011

It's that wonderful time of year again when customary holiday greeting cards are sent out to spread the holiday cheer"

One of the blessings of this time of year is the chance it gives us to connect with you all.

"We've had a happy, busy year here at

TITOKI BOUTIQUE ACCOMMODATION

Hamilton New Zealand "

Jude and John wish to thank all our

Past and future guests, friends, family and LinkedIn associates a very

MERRY CHRISTMAS and PROSOEROUS 2012

### Kiwi Christmas

Christmas in New Zealand is less about snow and sleigh bells and more about sun, sand and barbecues in the backyard.



OUR FUTURE IS WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT IN THE PAST.

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS IN NEW ZEALAND.

[AOTEAROA]

## Abel Tasman's New Zealand Christmas

The Christian origins of Christmas meant that before European contact, the celebration had no place in the calendar of Aotearoa. The first celebration of Christmas in New Zealand coincided with Abel Tasman's voyage to New Zealand in 1642. Unfortunately, things did not get off to a good start.

On 19 December 1642 the Dutch ships *Heemskerck* and *Zeehaen* were anchored in Golden Bay, home of the Ngati Tumatakokiri people. Clearly the locals felt threatened by these strange vessels and people. One of Tasman's small boats was passing between the two vessels when it was rammed by a waka (Maori canoe). Four of Tasman's party were killed. Several Ngati Tumatakokiri were killed when the Dutch opened fire from both ships.

Tasman saw no reason to hang around. After naming the place Moordenaers Baij (Murderers' Bay) he immediately set sail. On 20 December his expedition reached the Manawatu coast of the North Island before crossing the entrance of Cook Strait and anchoring east of Stephens and D'Urville islands. Here the crew encountered what many Wellingtonians have become used to at Christmas time – poor weather. While sheltering from a storm, the Dutch enjoyed the first Christmas dinner in New Zealand – freshly killed pork from the ship's menagerie washed down with extra rations of wine.

## Cook's 'goose'

The next celebration of Christmas in New Zealand occurred during James Cook's first expedition in 1769. The crew of the *Endeavour* marked the occasion by feasting on 'Goose pye' for their Christmas dinner while battling heavy seas off the tip of the North Island. There were no geese, so the crew had to improvise – with the magnificent gannet that had been shot in preparation for the feast by the ship's noted botanist, Joseph Banks. Apparently the *Endeavour's* crew spent Boxing Day 'nursing hangovers'. The Boxing Day tradition of suffering from Christmas excess clearly has a long history in New Zealand.

## The first sermon?

Russell Clark's reconstruction of Samuel Marsden's Christmas Day service at Oihi Bay in the Bay of Islands in 1814 is how many New Zealanders have visualised the first Christmas service in this country.



Clark's work commemorated the 150th anniversary of the event and shows Marsden at a makeshift pulpit preaching to a large group of Maori and Europeans. Ruatara, the Nga Puhi leader Marsden had met in Port Jackson (Sydney), translated the service and can be seen to Marsden's right. This service marked the beginnings of the Christian mission to New Zealand, but was it the first Christmas service or, indeed, the first preaching of the gospel in New Zealand?

On Christmas Day 1769 the French explorer Jean François Marie de Surville and his crew were in Doubtless Bay in the Far North. On board the *Saint Jean Baptiste* was a Dominican priest, Paul-Antoine de Villefeix. While no records survive, it seems highly likely that such an important Catholic festival would have been marked with a mass. In the absence of hard evidence New Zealand's English colonial traditions have favoured Marsden's claim to fame.

## New Zealand's Christmas Tree

The pohutukawa tree (*Metrosideros excelsa*) with its crimson flower has become an established part of the New Zealand Christmas tradition. This iconic Kiwi Christmas tree, which often features on greeting cards and in poems and songs, has become an important symbol for New Zealanders at home and abroad.

In 1833 the missionary Henry Williams described holding service under a 'wide spreading pohutukawa'. The first recorded reference to the pohutukawa as a Christmas tree came in 1867 when the Austrian geologist Ferdinand von Hochstetter noted that settlers referred to it as such. The pohutukawa, he observed, 'about Christmas ... are full of charming ... blossoms'; 'the settler decorates his church and dwellings with its lovely branches'. Other 19th-century references described the pohutukawa tree as the 'Settlers Christmas tree' and 'Antipodean holly'.

In 1941 army chaplain Ted Forsman composed a pohutukawa carol in which he made reference to 'your red tufts, our snow'. Forsman was serving in the Libyan Desert at the time, hardly the surroundings normally associated with the image of a fiery red pohutukawa tree. Many of his fellow New Zealanders, though, would have instantly identified with the image.

Today many school children sing about how 'the native Christmas tree of Aotearoa' fills their hearts 'with aroha'.

Pohutukawa and its cousin rata also hold a prominent place in Maori tradition. Legends tell of Tawhaki, a young Maori warrior, who attempted to find heaven to seek help in avenging the death of his father. He fell to earth and the crimson flowers are said to represent his blood.



## **The end-of-year prize for being a New Zealander**

Come late December and thousands of Kiwis get ready for their annual holiday. They look forward to lazy days at the beach or the bach (or crib), games of backyard cricket, food on the barbie and the holiday uniform of shorts, jandals and T-shirts. From before Christmas until after the New Year, we take our summer holidays – some people have said it's our end-of-year prize for being a New Zealander.

We haven't always had summer holidays. Of course, many of us still don't – we want to shop, go to the movies or watch TV, and we expect everything to be available, so hospitals, power supplies, police and much more still run 24/7. And if we live on a farm, then summer means more work, not holidays.

The summer break as we know it started to be popular in New Zealand from the 1920s. Restrictions on work hours meant that people began to have clearly defined days off around Christmas from the late 19th century.

Improved transport links boosted the summer break.



The number of automobiles grew rapidly in the 1920s and 1930s, but most inter-war holidaymakers travelled by rail. On Christmas Eve 1934, five express trains carrying 1800 travellers left Wellington for stations along the North Island main trunk line. Four years later, eight trains ferried more than 3000 passengers northwards. The *New Zealand Herald* described the bustle of Auckland station at Christmas 1935.

Throngs of people in the most diverse kinds of holiday attire, people laden with suitcases, bags and parcels of every conceivable shape and size, and above all children, armed with buckets and spades, toy aeroplanes, squeakers and a hundred and one other toys, all hurried or were hurried down the platforms, until it seemed that everyone in Auckland was bent on leaving the city.

By the 1950s the private automobile was the preferred means of getting away from it all. With cars, people could pack food and gear for prolonged holidays over the Christmas–New Year period. As cars took people further away from home, campsites were developed. Beaches were ideal places for camping, and from the later 1930s, permanent baches or cribs could be found at many beaches. Caravans came on the scene from the 1940s, giving holidaymakers even more options.



Summer holidays at the beach in the 21st century are not as easy as they used to be. Coastal land seems prime for people building large holiday homes, and in some areas, the humble Kiwi bach is under threat. Areas such as Pauanui, once a local holiday spot, have been transformed into upmarket beach suburbs. Some beachside camping grounds have also closed as their owners sell up to developers.

### **The tradition of Santa Claus in stores**

Generations of New Zealanders have experienced visiting Santa's grotto at their local department store or mall at Christmas. Many have sat on Santa's knee and reassured him that they have been good this year before answering the key question – what do you want for Christmas?

Santa is firmly at the centre of these rituals that are part of the multi-billion-dollar consumer-spending 'tradition' that Christmas has become.

Santa Claus made his commercial debut in New Zealand in 1894 when he took his place, complete with tree and toys, among the furniture in the Wellington DIC store on Lambton Quay. Santa appeared in Dunedin for the first time in 1902, also at the DIC. He arrived in Auckland in 1903 at the DSC store (later John Court Ltd).

Toys were not a permanent feature in most department stores, but having 'Santa in the house' in the lead up to Christmas changed this. In 1896 Wellington's DIC temporarily handed over its furniture section to Santa and his display of toys, beginning the trend of creating 'Christmas wonderlands'. In 1903 children visiting Santa at the DSC in Auckland were treated to a 'Magic Cave' designed by 'Frank L. Carr Jnr, the celebrated American Decorator'. As a result of these ventures, by the mid-1920s many stores had established permanent toy departments. Santa Claus still appears in shops and malls, but children today have the option of sending Santa an email with suggestions about preferred presents. They can even plot his movements on Christmas Eve over the Internet. Today's grandparents are left shaking their heads and muttering 'In my day ...'.

## A Pukeko in a Ponga Tree

[A New Zealand Christmas song]

On the first day of Christmas  
My true love gave to me  
A pukeko in a ponga tree

On the second day of Christmas  
My true love gave to me  
two kumera  
And a pukeko in a ponga tree

On the third day of Christmas  
....  
*And so on, until...*

On the twelfth day of Christmas  
My true love gave to me  
Twelve piupius swinging  
Eleven haka lessons  
Ten juicy fish heads  
Nine sacks of pipis  
Eight plants of puha  
Seven eels a swimming  
Six pois a twirling  
Five - big - fat - pigs !  
Four huhu grubs  
Three flax kits  
Two kumera  
and a pukeko in a ponga tree!



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TITOKI experience on "Trip Adviser"

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g255108-d1846478-Reviews-Titoki\\_Boutique\\_Accommodation-Hamilton\\_North\\_Island.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g255108-d1846478-Reviews-Titoki_Boutique_Accommodation-Hamilton_North_Island.html)

## Christmas gift Voucher.

Looking for a gift for someone special but they have everything already, well have we got the perfect ideal for you.

### A TITOKI BOUTIQUE ACCOMMODATION GIFT VOUCHER

As their hosts, we will provide excellent care to create a relaxing pampered experience.

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

## FROM Jude and John

@

# “TITOKI”

## BOUTIQUE ACCOMMODATION

1846 C River Road [North]  
Hamilton  
New Zealand 3210

P: +64 7 854 4044  
M: 021 25 25 200

E: [jude.johnb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jude.johnb@xtra.co.nz)

W: [www.titokiboutiqueaccommodation.co.nz](http://www.titokiboutiqueaccommodation.co.nz)

Facebook: Titoki Boutique Accommodation



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