

Member Profile

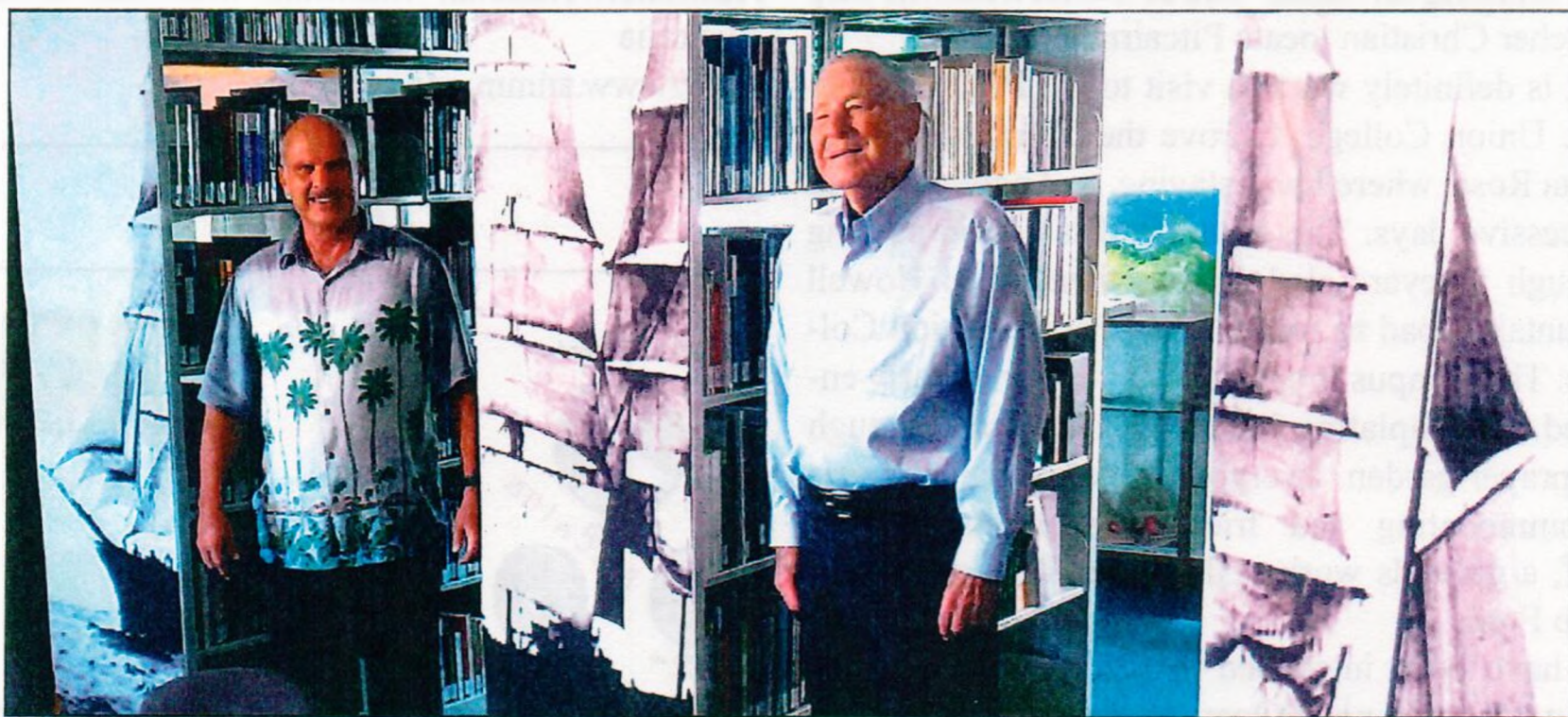
Don Albert

As a new member of the Pitcairn Islands Study Group (PISG), I would like to take an opportunity to introduce myself. I spent my youth in historic Salem, Massachusetts, living within view of Salem Harbor. Salem was an important port during the 18th and 19th centuries and site of Derby Wharf, Custom House, and the House of Seven Gables.

The Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) is a major tourist attraction in Salem. It evolved from the East India Marine Society (1799) founded by captains

Bounty Saga might be its connection with fruit -- after all, the *Bounty's* mission involved collecting breadfruit saplings (and again, how can one forget the episode of Bligh's missing coconuts).

After a stint in the United States Air Force, I earned geography degrees at Salem State College (BS), Appalachian State University (MA), and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Ph.D.). Currently I am a Professor of Geography at Sam Houston State University where I have been since 1999. Early in my career, I focused on medical ge-



Don Albert, left, and Herbert Ford at the Pitcairn Islands Study Center at Pacific Union College, Angwin, California, August 2017.

and supercargoes that ventured beyond the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn. The PEM's collection of Oceanic Art includes over 20,000 objects from Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia and is absolutely worth a visit. Incidentally, Salem figures fleetingly in the Pitcairn chronicles. In 1831, the *Charles Doggett* (Captain William Driver) returned Pitcairners home after a short-lived and tragic attempt to settle Tahiti.

As a teen, I had the unique experience of attending "Essex Aggie," an agricultural high school in Hathorne (Danvers), Massachusetts. Here I developed an interest in horticulture with a concentration in pomology. One reason for an interest in the

geography, but later gravitated towards specializing in geography education. Increasingly, I have been writing esoteric pieces on various topics including the International Date Line, antipodes, potholes, and "Around the World in Eighty Days." I have a link to my professional webpage at the end of this piece where you can find more information on my activities and a list of selected publications.

One of my pastimes over the last decade has been foreign travel with trips to Belize, Spain (including visits to Gibraltar, Portugal, and Morocco), Australia, Singapore, and Turkey. During the visit to Australia, I was able to tour a replica of the HMB *Endeavor* moored at the Australian National Museum

located at Kings Wharf in Sydney. I spent several hours exploring the ship, and in some spots literally crawling below deck (this was prior to hip-replacement surgery).

Last summer I had the opportunity to visit the Pitcairn Islands Study Center (PISC) in Angwin, California, at Pacific Union College. I spent three and one-half days examining PISC's extensive files, books, paintings, ship models, carvings, character busts, and other unique artifacts (pigtails!).

PISC director Herb Ford was a wonderful host. It was certainly a pleasure and honor meeting him and I'll never forget his hospitality. I was visiting the PISC on a research grant supported by the Nancy and Jim Tiller Endowment, and for that I am grateful. The purpose of the visit was to fact check and explore resources that might support a manuscript I was working on titled, "Did or Could Seabirds help Fletcher Christian locate Pitcairn Island."

It is definitely worth a visit to the PISC and Pacific Union College. I drove the 50 minutes from Santa Rosa, where I was staying, to Angwin on four successive days. The drive itself is scenic passing through vineyard-clad valleys then up to Howell Mountain Road to Angwin and Pacific Union College. The campus is spectacular -- I particularly enjoyed contemplating life while moseying through the prayer garden. Everyone I met on campus was accommodating and friendly, including library staff, a grounds worker, the Dean, and, of course, Herb Ford.

I have been interested in the *Bounty* Saga for about 15 years now. Over the last several years I have read and re-read my growing collection of *Bounty*, Pitcairn, and related books. I have submitted one manuscript mentioned before, and developing a second hoping to illuminate the Wednesday-Thursday-Friday October Christian enigma about Pitcairn's first born.

What draws me to the *Bounty* Saga? Besides being an incredibly romantic tale of adventure, I can relate to Fletcher Christian -- despotic leadership is difficult to endure. For this reason, and because of the background I shared earlier, I see parallels from my life matching topics, interests, and situations encountered by Fletcher Christian and the mutineers.

With this brief introduction, I am excited about joining the ranks of the Pitcairn Islands Study Group. I hope I will have an opportunity to contrib-

ute to the *Bounty* literature, and a chance to interact with PISG members.

Don Albert is a Professor of Geography in the Department of Geography and Geology at Sam Houston State University, in Huntsville, Texas.

Websites

Salem Maritime, Salem Massachusetts

<https://www.nps.gov/sama/index.htm>

Peabody Essex Museum, Salem Massachusetts

<https://www.pem.org/>

House of Seven Gables, Salem Massachusetts

<https://7gables.org/>

Don Albert, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas

<http://www.shsu.edu/academics/geography-geology/people/albert.html>

Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney, Australia

<http://www.anmm.gov.au/>

Help!



Your editor is getting old and feeble (no comments needed!). He can't remember hardly anything anymore! It ain't fun, but given that we are in dire need of articles for the Log, it's even more critical when I have part of something on hand and can't locate the rest of it. Such is the case with this illustration of an early Pitcairn cover. It is supposed to illustrate an article sent by someone. But I can't find the article! I have searched email, I have checked through mountains of previously used articles, all to no avail. So please, if you sent me an article with this illustration, contact me and I will use it in the next issue.

(And I can use a lot more material as well.)

I'll try not to lose it again. I promise!