

= Meralda Warren =

Meralda Elva Junior Warren ( born 28 June 1959 ) is an artist and poet of Pitcairn Island , a remote British Overseas Territory in the South Pacific . She works in both English and Pitkern , the island 's distinctive creole language . Her book , *Mi Base side orn Pitcairn* , written with the island 's six children , is the first to be written and published in both English and Pitkern . As an artist , she works with tapa cloth , a Polynesian tradition . She has also published a cookbook featuring Pitcairn Island cuisine .

Warren has also served as the island 's nurse , its only police officer , a ham radio operator , and as a member of the territory 's governing council , among many other roles .

= = Biography = =

Warren was born on Pitcairn Island on 28 June 1959 , the second child of Jacob Ralph " Chippie " Warren ( 1920 ? 2007 ) and Mavis Mary Brown ( born 1936 ) . Warren is the sister of Jay Warren ( born 1950 ) who served as the third mayor of the Pitcairn Islands ( 2004 ? 2007 ) , and previously as the colony 's 29th magistrate ( 1991 ? 1997 ) . She is a first cousin of Mike Warren ( born 1964 ) , the colony 's fourth mayor ( 2007 ? 2014 ) . She is the descendant of mutineers from the famed Mutiny on the Bounty ( 1789 ) and of the Tahitian men and women who journeyed with the mutineers in settling the island in 1790 .

= = = Artist , poet , author and many other jobs = = =

Warren is a poet , and the author of two books , including *Mi Base side orn Pitcairn* ( " My Favourite Place on Pitcairn " ) , written with children on Pitcairn Island . It is the first book written and published in Pitkern and English .

Her works include a cookbook , *Taste of Pitcairn* featuring the cuisine of the Pitcairn Islands , and poetry in both Pitkern and English . Pitkern is an English @-@ based creole language derived from eighteenth @-@ century English and Tahitian . She writes poetry in both English and Pitkern .

In 2007 , Warren revived Pitcairn 's tradition of art created on tapa cloth , a woven bark cloth common in Polynesian culture . Her works have been displayed in museums and galleries in Tahiti , Norfolk Island , and New Zealand . In 2011 , she was one of seven artists awarded a Commonwealth Connections International Arts Residency , which provided a grant of £ 8 @, @ 000 that allowed her to work with other artists in New Zealand . She is the first recipient from the Pitcairn Islands .

Pitcairn has a small population . The island 's 48 residents often serve in several capacities or jobs . Warren describes her many roles on her personal website :

Travelling with patients to New Zealand and Tahiti and taking up Nursing , Radio Operator for the shore to ship skeds from ZBP station and twice daily contact with Auckland international Radio telephone link , Working in our Co @-@ op store , Council member for many years as well as being the Governors appointee member to council a few times , Becoming the first female Police & Immigration Officer for a few years . Lands Commission president , Lands court member , Bee keeper since 1978 . ASL operator for siesmic Vault , Installing wireless networking throughout Adamstown , Duncan cleaner , Contract Lawnmowing jobs , and many misc jobs inc Tourism and Entertainment . PHEWWwww. it became apprent to me that what I enjoy most is my art . ( T ) his is getting pushed aside whilst I am working these time consuming no pay or low paid positions which was making me very tired and yes .... Bitchy [ sic ]

Beginning in 1996 , Warren served as the island 's only police officer . However , since no one had been arrested on the island since the 1950s , her duties involved issuing driving licenses and stamping visitors ' passports . Warren had no qualifications or formal training to be a police officer , and was given the job because everyone on the island had a " job " . The island 's jail was described as " the size of a garden shed and riddled with termites , " and its cells had been used to store building materials and lifejackets . When the island came into the international spotlight due to a

sexual abuse scandal , a law enforcement professional sent to the island criticized their practices , stating " It was glaringly obvious ... that their standard of policing was not really adequate . "

Warren was elected on 15 December 2004 to the Island Council . As a radio operator , she broadcasts under the call sign VP6MW .

= = = Pitcairn 's sexual abuse trial = = =

Warren was an outspoken critic of accusations that the island 's girls had been sexually abused when young , and the prosecution of a selected number of Pitcairn 's male residents . She claimed that young girls on Pitcairn customarily became sexually active after age 12 , a practice of underage sex that had been accepted as a Polynesian tradition since the settlement of the island in 1790 . One resident , Olive Christian , said of her girlhood , " We all thought sex was like food on the table . "

Many Pitcairn Island men blamed the British police for persuading the women involved to press charges . Some of the women agreed , and advocated a conspiracy theory that the trial was , in Warren 's words , " a British plot to jail the [ community 's ] able @-@ bodied men and ' close ' the island " , and that the British officials " picked on all the viable young men , the ones who are the backbone of this place . "

A majority of the island 's residents denied or excused the allegations . During the trial , Warren circulated a poem titled " Is Seven a Lucky Number ? " that criticized the British government and lawyers ' attempts to impose British law against their island 's traditions .

As the case wore on , Warren reflected that " the bottom had fallen out of our world ? We lost our trust for each other . " Her brother , Jay Warren , who was accused of " indecent assault " , was the only defendant among the seven accused to be acquitted on 24 October 2004 .

Warren was convicted of assault during a drunken disagreement with another resident when the two were angered by tensions over the sexual abuse matter . The case was prosecuted by a Crown prosecutor and tried by a New Zealand magistrate . Warren was fined NZ \$ 60 . The case cost the British government NZ \$ 40 @, @ 000 to prosecute .

= = Works = =

1986 : A Taste of Pitcairn : The First Pitcairn Island Cookbook ( cookbook )

2005 : A Taste of Pitcairn : The First Pitcairn Island Cookbook ( cookbook ) ( updated edition )

2008 : Mi Base side orn Pitcairn ( " My Favourite Place on Pitcairn " ) , with 6 children on Pitcairn