

The Kerembei Boat Song

by

Lew Toulmin, 2016

(Named after the village on Maewo island, Vanuatu, where the Women's Cultural and Arts Festival was held, August 2016, and sung at the Kerembei Guest House, using the tune of the "Mingulay Boat Song," Hugh S. Robertson, 1938)

Sailor, check how tight the winch is --
What care we now, for wind or weather?
For we know that every inch is
Sailin' her closer to **Kerembei**.

Chorus:

*So heave ya ho, boys; let her go, boys;
Turn her head round, into the weather,
Heave ya ho, boys, let her go, boys
Sailin' her homeward to **Kerembei**.*

First of all, there came the lava,
Then appeared the sacred kava.
Our Notari make Lengwasa
With the tuskers at **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Uliveo, Santo, Moso,
Rano, Varo, Atchin, Vao,
None like Maewo, like our high land,
Our own dear island, with **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Wives are waiting, on the banks, or
Gazing seaward, at near Ambae;
Turn her 'round, boys, and we'll anchor
Where the sun sets on **Kerembei**.

Chorus