

SKY PILOT NEWS OCTOBER 1973

Published monthly by the Sky Pilot Fellowship Ltd., Marella Mission Farm.

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Residential Address: Acres Road, Kellyville.

Subscription: 25 cents per annum. Registered at GPO Sydney, for transmission by post as a periodical—Category A

SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP

25th ANNIVERSARY & SALE OF WORK

to be held (D.V.) in the grounds of

Marella Mission Farm

ACRES ROAD, KELLYVILLE, N.S.W.

SATURDAY, 27th OCT., 1973

MORNING and AFTERNOON

FREE PARKING.

1.30 p.m. PUBLIC MEETING. ALL THE USUAL STALLS.

REFRESHMENTS AND HOT PIES AVAILABLE.

Proceeds in aid of our work for needy Aboriginal children.

Do your Christmas shopping while you enjoy a day's outing in the country; at the same time you will be helping this work for the dark children of our land.

Make up a car party, including your friends. For children there will be swings, donkey and pony rides and motor boat rides on the Mission Lake and other attractions.

If you are unable to come by car, there are buses from Parramatta to Kellyville Post Office. The Mission Farm is about one mile from the Post Office, but transport between the Mission Farm and Post Office bus stop will be arranged for the following buses:—

Depart Parramatta Station: 9.06 a.m., 10.06 a.m., 11.06 a.m., 11.40 a.m. and 12.20 p.m.

Depart Kellyville P.O.: 11.50 a.m., 12.45 p.m., 1.23 p.m., 1.53 p.m., 4.16 p.m.

If coming by car, turn off Windsor Road at President Road, follow to end, then turn left into Green Road and first turn to left is Acres Road. The Mission Farm is the third home on the left in Acres Road.

Gifts for the stalls will be greatly appreciated. They should be railed to Marella Mission Farm, Parramatta Railway Station, or brought direct to the Mission Farm before or on the day of the Rally or posted to Box 29, P.O., Castle Hill, 2154, as early as possible.

For further particulars, please 'phone Marella Mission Farm, 629-1555.

PLEASE PRAY FOR A FINE DAY.

THE DARTER OR DIVER: From the Sky Pilot's Log 2CH Broadcast

It was the beginning of the dry season in Arnhem Land. George reined-in his horse and looked at the water of the billabong. We had been mustering all morning, and now, in the heat of the noon, we wanted a place to camp for lunch.

George looked at the scene with approval. "I reckon this place ought to do us for a dinner camp. It's nice and cool in the shade, and we might have a chance to catch a fish or two if we set lines. What do you say, Silas?"

"It'll do me," said Silas Palmer. "Any place that is cool where I can sit down will suit me. I thought you were going to work all through the day. Whew! it's hot galloping after cattle and rounding up those beastly little calves. Yes, this'll do me fine."

"Look at that diver swimmin' in the water," George observed. "I tried to eat one once when I was real hungry, and it made me sick. I've eaten crows, but I'm hanged if anyone could eat a diver."

"A diver?" Palmer asked. "What's a diver?"

"George means that bird with the long snaky neck," I explained. "Its real name is the darter, but mostly they're called divers, or shags."

"I like most birds," George continued, "but I hate that stinkin' diver. Maybe it's because it's so filthy. You watch him dive when I throw a stone at it. There you are! He can swim all right, that bird; he's like a bloomin' submarine."

"He's coming to the surface again," exclaimed Palmer. "Look at his long, snaky head! Here, where's a stone; I'll make him dive again."

"Suppose we catch him?" George suggested. "I think we could manage it if we spread out a bit and keep him under water for as long as possible. You go round the other side, Silas, and we'll keep him under water with stones."

"Don't hurt him, George," I pleaded: "He can't help being a smelly diver. He may have wanted to be a swan, or something beautiful, but nature has never given him a chance."

"I won't hurt him, I'll promise you that," said George. "I never kill birds for fun. If I'm hungry, I'll kill 'em for food. Anyways we couldn't hit that bird if we tried. Go on, Silas. He's over your side now. Let him have it."

The diver disappeared under water as the stone fell near him; then we watched the surface of the water to see where next he would emerge. The wily bird doubled round under water, and his long neck showed for an instant nearly fifty yards from where he had dived. George was ready and another stone fell beside the bird almost before it had time to breathe. It submerged in a swirl of splashing water. Again the diver came to the surface, but Silas was ready and a stone forced him under water before he had time to look around. The dives were not so long now. Evidently the bird was getting tired.

"Good work," said George. "Keep it up, Silas, and we'll capture the fellow yet. There he is again. No, to the right. That's it. Ha ha, I guess he's losing his wind now. Where's he gone this time?"

"He's behind you," Palmer yelled. "He seems to be able to see under water, and he can come out wherever he likes to. He only went a few yards that time. You've nearly got him."

"Here he is again. There you are, you stinkin' old shag! Down you go again!"

Again and again the unfortunate diver submerged; now he was tired, he only lasted a few yards under water, and his bursting lungs forced him to the surface. Finally he could do no more. He tried to dive, but his flapping wings would not force him under water. George, clothes and all, waded into the water, and soon he had the struggling bird in his grasp. I'm sure the diver thought his last moments had come. He was too exhausted to struggle much, and he looked so pathetic and helpless that even George, who disliked his species, felt sorry for him.

"Poor old fellow," he said, "we ain't goin' to hurt you. I'll let you go in a minute, when you've got your wind again. I don't eat shags. Come and have a look at him, Silas. He don't look so graceful now he's out of the water and knocked up."

"Phew!" Palmer screwed up his nose. "He stinks all right. You must have been mighty hungry to try to eat one of these things, George."

"Believe me, I was. But if I was starvin' now I wouldn't eat a diver or a thin goanna. It don't pay."

"Oh, goanna isn't bad," said Palmer. "I've eaten it myself."

"I said I wouldn't eat a *thin* goanna," George explained. "If you get a fat one, it's mighty good eatin', but even the Aborigines won't touch a thin one. They call them 'bone fellow' when they're thin, and it must be somethin' about them that's poisonous, as it makes even an Aboriginal mighty sick to eat thin goanna."

"I've known Aborigines to eat divers," I put in.

"Maybe you have," said George. "But I ain't an Aboriginal, and I'm not goin' to eat this one, not even if you paid me. They're funny lookin' birds, aren't they?"

"I've heard them called snake-birds," said Palmer, "and the name suits them. The head and neck remind me of a snake."

"Do you know anythin' about them, Smithy?" George asked. "I mean, what they eat, apart from fish, and where they nest?"

"I'm afraid I don't know a great deal about them," I replied. "They eat fish and aquatic animals."

"What sort of a squatty animal did you say it eats?" George asked.

"Aquatic, not squatty. Aquatic means related to water. This bird eats almost everything it can find in the water."

"Well, why the heck can't you say so, instead of usin' them new-fangled names? And where does it build it's nest? In the water?"

"No, it builds its nest in a tree overhanging the water, or actually standing in the water. It lays from three to five greenish-coloured eggs covered with a coating of lime."

"Does it!" George did not sound impressed. "Well, its eggs don't sound any more attractive to eat than the bird itself. If that's all we can find out about it, I'll let this fellow go. I'll never get the smell off my hands now. It's a fishy smell, and it spoils my appetite. Well, old fellow, here's where your luck's in. Now beat it."

The diver need no second command. As soon as George lowered it into the water, it dived, and when next it reappeared it was in the middle of the billabong again. We made a fire and boiled the billy; but over our lunch the conversation turned to the diver again.

"I bet we surprised that diver," said George, "when we caught it. Ha, ha, it looked so cocksure as it swam in the water or dived the first time; it was a bit of a joke to take some of the conceit out of it."

"It knows how to dive," Palmer agreed, "but it can't live without air. By making it dive again before it had time to get its wind properly, we had it beaten. No, it can't live without air."

George chuckled. "It thought it was a submarine, but it had to come up for air. When we cut off its air supply it was done."

"It reminds me of the story of Antaeus," I remarked.

"Ants?" said George. "What ants? Is it a riddle?"

"Antaeus was a giant who lived before your time, George, according to Greek mythology."

"More long names," complained George. "Well, if you're goin' to tell us the story, leave out the long names, they make my head go round."

"I'll do my best. Antaeus was an earth-born giant who was the friend of the pygmies, and they lived in Africa. The pygmies were from six to eight inches in height, and Antaeus was so tall that he carried a pine tree, eight feet in diameter, as a walking stick."

"I don't like doubtin' your word, Smithy, but I have a feelin' that this story ain't strictly true."

"It's only a myth. That's what it is, a myth."

George laughed. "Listen carefully, Silas," he said, "or you might myth the point."

"Very clever," Palmer was sarcastic. "But why was Antaeus like the diver?"

"I'm coming to that. Whenever this giant touched the earth with hand or foot, or any part of his body, he grew stronger than ever he had before. The earth, of course, was his mother. Well, another giant . . ."

"Sure you ain't stretchin' it a bit too much?" suggested George.

"Another giant named Hercules wrestled with Antaeus, and the way he defeated him was to lift him clear of the ground. When he was unable to touch the ground, Antaeus grew weaker and eventually died."

"That's a very touching story," said Palmer. "I learned it at school."

"At school I went to," George put in, "they didn't waste time with rubbish like that. We was taught to read and write and figure, and that's about all. But I guess you mean that the giant died because he was cut off from touchin' the earth; and the diver we caught was cut off from the air, and that weakened him."

It was Palmer's turn to be clever. "I thought you were going to myth the point," he said, "but you didn't."

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There is a parable for us in the story of the diver and the myth of Antaeus and Hercules. George knew that the diver could not live if it was forced to stay under water, and therefore he attempted, quite successfully, to keep it away from the air till it was exhausted. Hercules knew the weakness of the giant son of Mother Earth, who grew weaker every moment his contact with the earth was severed.

The devil knows the weakness of the Christian; and if it is possible to cut him off from the source of his strength, he is doomed to weaken. And the Christian's strength is in prayer and fellowship with God and with prayerful study of the Bible. It may not seem a serious matter to miss one day's devotion; it may not seem important to read those few verses of Scripture every day; but this is severing the Christian's contact with his source of strength. If you stop praying and studying God's Word, the devil won't worry you much, because he knows that day by day you will get weaker and weaker until the time comes when you will fall an easy victim to the temptations of the world.

And the final entry in today's Log is taken from the 18th chapter of Luke: "And Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

SALE OF WORK: As advertised in this leaflet our next Sale of Work is set down for the last Saturday in October, 27th. We would be glad of gifts for the various stalls. Any needlework, especially aprons, are very welcome; also cakes, plants and in fact anything saleable. Gifts should be brought out to the Mission Farm in advance of the sale or railed to Parramatta Railway Station, where they are picked up each week. We would also value your prayers for a fine day.

RITA: Rita, one of our old girls who helped us on the staff for some time, is now living at

Brewarrina. Recently we had a very nice letter from her saying how grateful she is for all we have done for her at Marella. She says that the training she received here has kept her from falling into many of the sins that have claimed so many of her people. Not all of the children who pass through our hands express their appreciation; mostly they are only too pleased to leave. It is only in after years, when they have families of their own, that they realise all that Marella has meant to them. But we do not work just for the gratitude of the children; we feel called of God to undertake this work and we are content to leave the results to Him. All the same we are human enough to be pleased when a letter, such as this one from Rita, is received.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS: Already some of our supporters are asking us what we require as gifts for Christmas. Naturally our greatest need is for finance so that we can purchase just the articles that are most needful. But a lot of friends like to make small gifts in kind, and for their guidance it may be mentioned that the following are always useful:

Any kind of groceries or tinned foods, biscuits and such like. Thongs, sandshoes, school shoes, singlets, pants and socks; school requisites and toilet articles such as soap, tooth paste, combs, shampoo, band-aids (and toys) are always in short supply.

APEX CLUB: The Apex Club of Castle Hill very kindly painted the weatherboards of the Boys' Dormitory Wing recently. This has freshened up the building considerably and the action of this service Club is much appreciated. The Club has also agreed to build us a Separator Room for our dairy. This may take a little time but it will be a great asset. At present we are skimming the milk but with a separator we will be able to make a lot more butter for the children.

RALPH AND LOUIS: Both Ralph and Louis are now working at the Sheltered Workshop at Baulkham Hills. They do not earn very much but they are kept fully occupied, and we are pleased that they have settled down. They both receive pensions.