

SKY PILOT NEWS

AUGUST, 1962

Published monthly by the Sky Pilot Fellowship Ltd., Marella Mission Farm, Acres Road, Kellyville, N.S.W. Phone 634-2427.

Director: K. Langford-Smith, F.R.G.S.

Secretary, Mrs. Norma K. Warwick

Postal address: P.O. Box 29, Castle Hill, N.S.W.

SUBSCRIPTION, 2/6 per annum.

Registered at G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by post as a periodical.

SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP

RALLY and SALE of WORK

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

MARELLA MISSION FARM

ACRES ROAD, KELLYVILLE, N.S.W.

Saturday, 27th October, 1962

10.30 a.m. — 5 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING, 2.30 p.m.

ALL THE USUAL STALLS: REFRESHMENTS AND HOT PIES
AVAILABLE ALL DAY

Proceeds in aid of our work for needy aboriginal children.

Do your 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 own land.

Make up a car party, including your friends. For children there will be swings, and slippery dip.

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: 8.50 a.m., 11.03 a.m., 12.21 p.m., 1.05 p.m.

Depart Kellyville P.O.: 1.22 p.m., 1.52 p.m., 5.07 p.m., 6.42 p.m.

If coming by car turn off Windsor Road at President Road, follow to end, then turn left into Greens 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 the "Sky Pilot," Parramatta Railway Station, or brought direct to the Mission Farm before or on the day of the Rally.

For further particulars, please 'phone Marella Mission Farm, 634-2427.

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 spot 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. "It's real name is the darter, but mostly they're are 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 sub-

merged 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 round. 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 this 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 moment 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 blacks won't touch a thin one. They call them 'bone fellow' when they're thin, and it must be something about them that's poisonous, as it makes even a black-fellow mighty sick to eat thin goanna."

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

"Maybe you have," said George. "But I ain't a blackfellow, 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 reminds me of a snake."

"Do you know anything 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 that 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 its 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 needed 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 careful, 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 weaker, and eventually died."

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

"At the 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."

* * *

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 to-day'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."

THE LIONS CLUB: The Lions Club completed their work on a section of the new quarters for the dark children. This consists of about three-fifths of the total building, but it includes separate bathrooms and toilets for boys and girls, and a hot water system. We are very grateful to the Club for the splendid work they have put into this building and the thorough way they have completed what they undertook.

It will be remembered that the Mission purchased the hut from the Housing Commission, and paid to have it moved, in two sections, to the present site. The Lions Club then took over a large section of it and built partitions, and lined and ceiled it; then they fitted lights and did the plumbing necessary. They have painted it inside and outside, and made it into very comfortable quarters for the children.

On 25th August, they held a "handing-over" ceremony at the Mission Farm. Guests included the Shire President, Cr. A. Whaling; the M.H.R. for Mitchell, Mr. John Armitage, and the M.L.A. for The Hills, Cr. M. Ruddock. Lions President, Mr. Gerry Levy took the chair, and welcomed the many members of the Lions Club and their families, as well as other guests. Afternoon tea was prepared by members of the Women's Auxiliary of the Sky Pilot Fellowship. The Lions Club then gave a party for the dark children from the Mission Farm.

Unfortunately, there was a sharp shower of rain before the afternoon tea was over, and the guests had to scatter for shelter; however, it was fine for the meeting, and it cleared up again afterwards.

The Lions Club provided all the material used in the renovations, and this cost them about £800; they also spent 750 man-hours on the job, so the saving to the Mission is tremendous. All credit is due to this Lions Club of Baulkham Hills, which, though only a young Club, has already done so much for charities in this district.

The children have already been moved into the new quarters, and they are very happy and comfortable. They are still a little over-crowded, but when we are able to complete the renovation of the rest of the building it will be much better. Provision is being made for rooms for the bigger girls and the bigger boys, apart from the other girls and boys; there will also be two staff rooms and a playroom, for use in wet weather.

VOLUNTARY WORKERS: Our voluntary workers continue to do a great deal to help

forward this work. A party of men from the Milperra Congregational Church cut a lot of firewood to help us through the Winter, and this was a great convenience to us. Mr. L. Maher has been working some of the garden for us, and has peas, broad beans and other vegetables growing nicely; he has potatoes to plant next month, and these vegetables will be a great help to us, with our large "family".

Mr. Colin Morris continues to give many of his Saturdays to help with the odd jobs, as does Mr. Arthur Langford-Smith. We have come to depend on these men for the many jobs that are so necessary to the running of a work such as this.

Mr. Kennedy has continued to supervise all the voluntary builders, and his help in preparing plans for buildings, cupboards, children's playground and other projects, has been invaluable. He has a number of men lined up for further building jobs in September, and it is hoped shortly to finish the children's playground, a safety fence round the dam near the playground, and further renovations in the other sections of the new quarters.

THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARIES: The faithful workers of our Parramatta and Blue Mountains Women's Auxiliaries continue to support us in every way possible. It is largely owing to the efforts of these women that we were able to establish this work and carry it on for so long. All the Street Stalls and Sales of Work are organised by members, and on any special occasion we can always count on their willing help in every way. The Blue Mountains Branch, which has already donated the Mission office, is continuing to work for office equipment and other very necessary improvements.

Mrs. Onslow, who for a long time now has continued to sort all clothing and articles sent in and prepare them for use, or for sale, has, with the assistance of Mrs. Knight, done a magnificent job.

Other voluntary workers, too numerous to mention individually, continue to do more than their share of the work that seems to mount up in spite of all our efforts. To all of these, we extend our grateful thanks, and we freely acknowledge our indebtedness to them.

Above all, we have cause to praise God for the wonderful way He has blessed this work and enabled us to overcome the many problems that arise from time to time. With calm confidence in Him, we press forward, knowing that He will not fail us. We pray that everything that is done may be to His honour and Glory, and that it will help forward the extension of His Kingdom.