

5th ANNIVERSARY

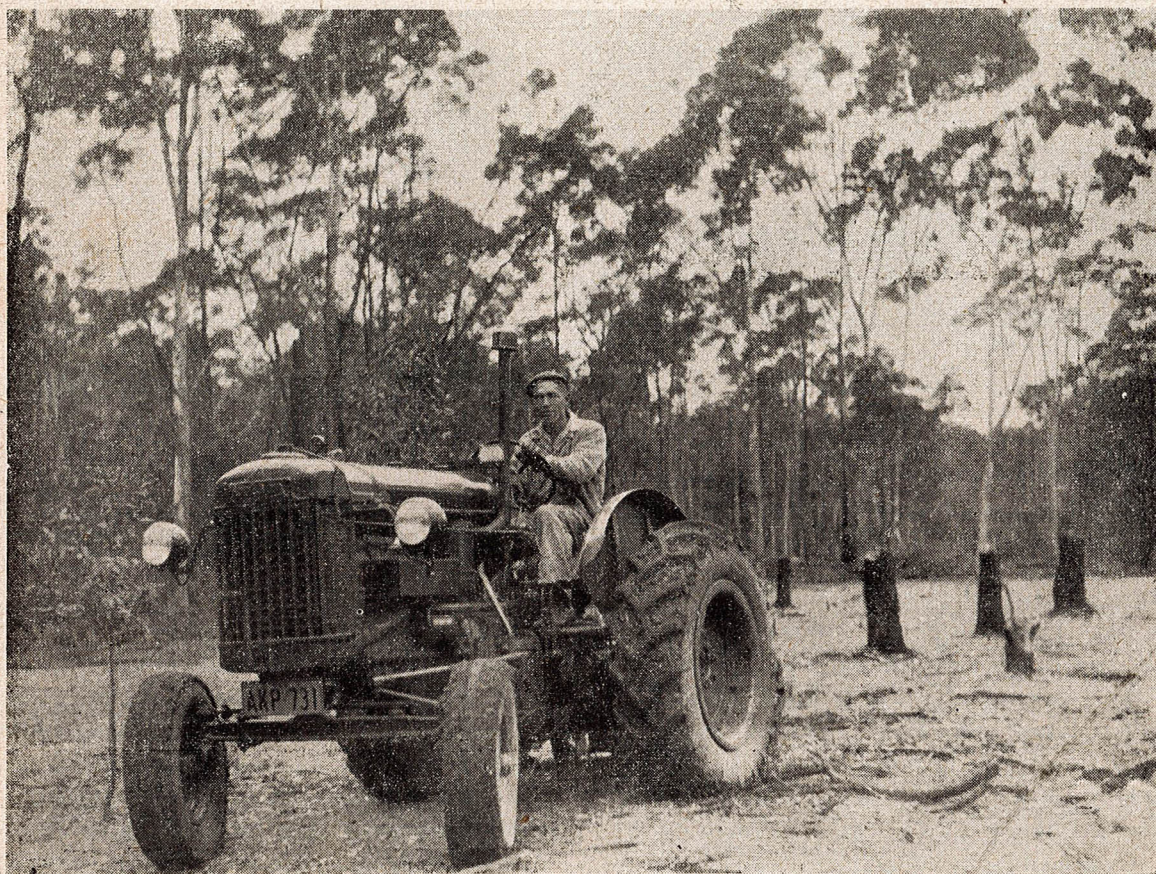
# SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP

OCTOBER, 1953  
Marella Mission Farm,  
Acres Road, Kellyville

2CH

DIRECTOR: K. LANGFORD-SMITH, F.R.G.S.  
Pilot's Log: Saturday 11 a.m.  
Children's Corner: Tuesday, 5 p.m.

Address all letters to the "Sky Pilot," 2CH, 47 York Street, Sydney.  
Phone: Until 12th Dec., 1953—UW 2427. AFTER 12th Dec., 1953—YA 2427



*Mr. McDonald clears site of proposed Home for Dark Children with the Mission Tractor.*

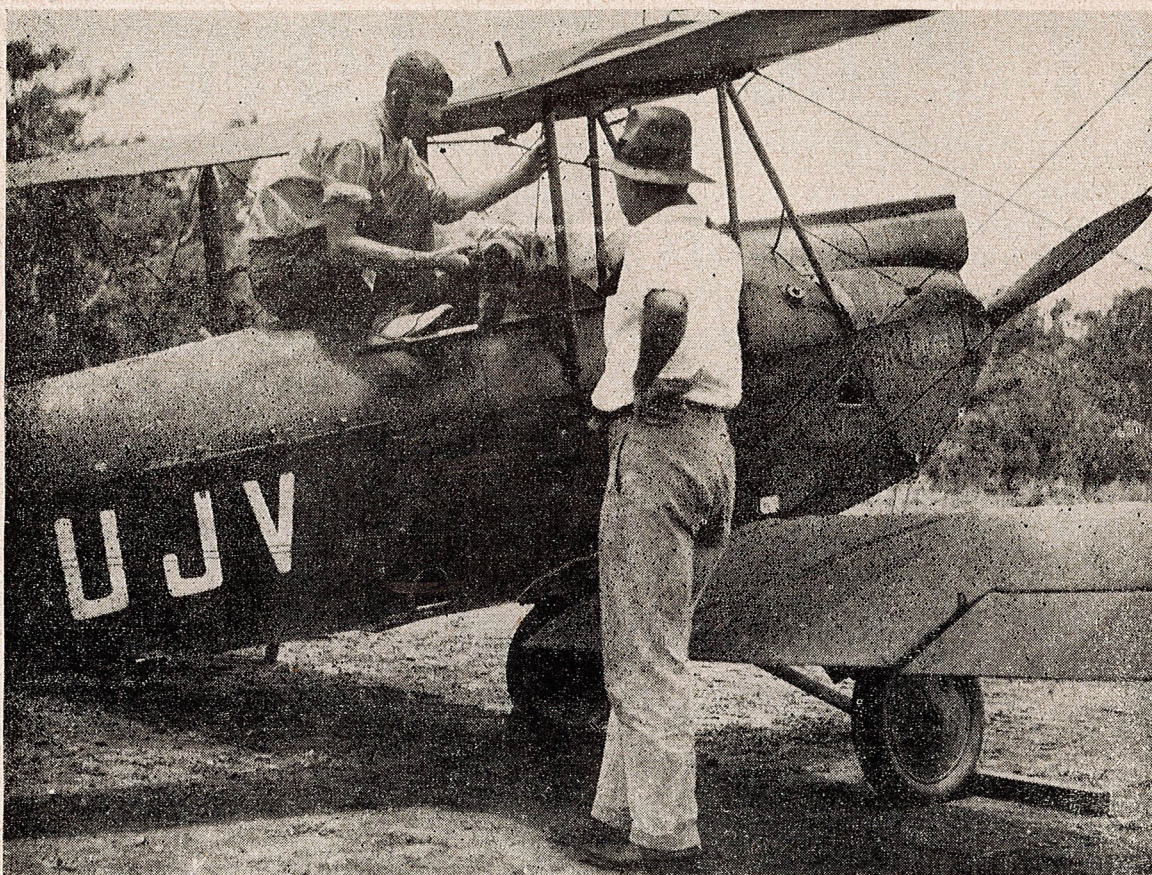
## WHAT IS THE SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP?

It is an association of Christian friends from all Churches who are interested in the welfare of children of aboriginal descent now living in the congested areas of the city.

## THE NAME.

Keith Langford-Smith began work amongst the aborigines of Arnhem Land as a missionary of the Church Missionary Society 25 years ago. Owing to the isolation and lack of





*In Arnhem Land Mr. C. H. Holmes (now Editor of "Walkabout") receives mail carried by the "Sky Pilot."*

medical aid in emergencies over 25 missionaries had been forced to leave the mission station in a period of 20 years. To overcome this Mr. Langford-Smith returned south in 1930 and by his own efforts raised the money for the purchase of a Gipsy Moth aeroplane. This he named "Sky Pilot", with the approval of his friend Dr. Gordon (better known as Ralph Connor), who had written a book about a "Sky Pilot" in the Canadian bush. Mr. Langford-Smith flew his aeroplane back to Arnhem Land where he made over 200 landings and completed 20,000 miles of exploration in country where no aeroplane had ever operated. He became known as the "Sky Pilot of Arnhem Land."

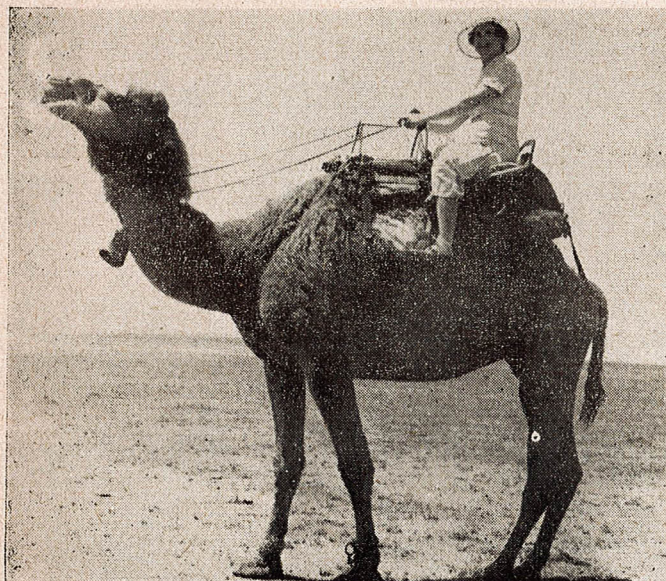
**THE RADIO.** The radio session known as the "Sky Pilot's Log" has been resumed on

Station 2CH at 11 a.m. on Saturdays. It is no longer a daily session, as it was for the first four years, and full commercial rates have to be paid. The cost of time alone is £6/6/- for each quarter-hour session, besides which there are other expenses such as postage, stationery, travelling, etc. About 12,000 letters have been answered individually since the session commenced but the results have fully justified the time and expense.

As a large proportion of our listeners do not attend any Church the radio has been the means of reaching them with the simple Gospel message. Many have been brought to God as a result.

The special Children's Session on Tuesday afternoon at 5 p.m. on 2CH has continued now for an unbroken period of 4 years and is as popular as ever.





*Mrs. K. Langford-Smith rides on a Camel in Central Australia in 1936.*

**COUNCIL.** Owing to the rapid expansion of the work and the increasing demands on the time of our Council members we have had to make some changes. Our retiring members are Rev. R. C. Kerle and Rev. G. R. Delbridge. We are deeply grateful to these friends who, amidst their many activities, spared time to launch the Sky Pilot Fellowship. Mr. W. I. Dalrymple has very kindly consented to carry on as a Council member and he has already done much for the Fellowship. Two new members have been elected, Mr. Dudley Foord, B.Sc., who is very well known for his work amongst the young people at the University and with C.S.S.M.; and Mr. R. C. Baggs, who was for many years on the staff of 2CH and as programme manager did much to foster the Sky Pilot's Log. His wide experience of radio work will be invaluable to us in our broadcasting programme.

#### **ACTIVITIES.**

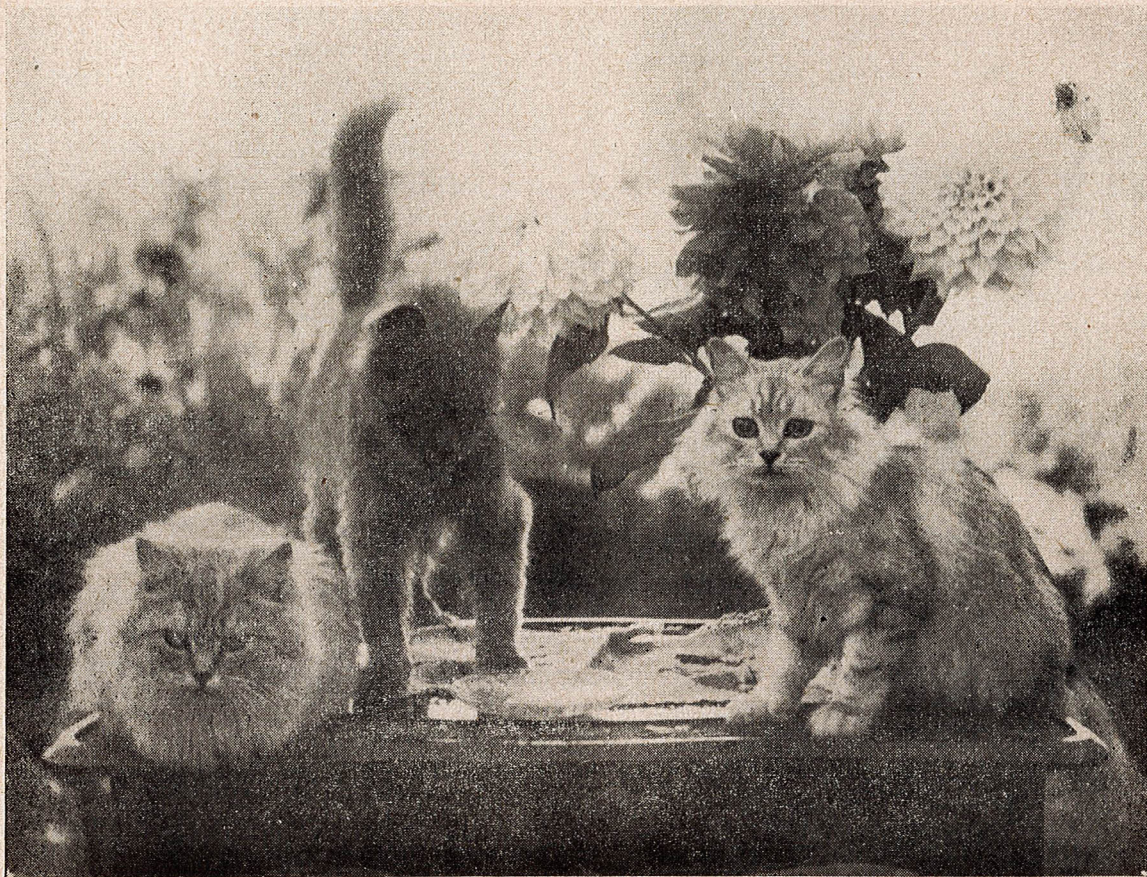
**Radio.** The objects of the broadcasts are (a) to present the Gospel message in the form of dramatised stories that will hold the interest of non-Church goers; (b) To bring comfort, encouragement and entertainment to

infirm and aged listeners; (c) To create interest and understanding of the problems of work amongst the Australian aborigines and the bushmen of the Never Never. From letters received and friends met at deputation meetings we have heard of a great number of listeners whose lives have been changed by the Spirit of God working through the "Sky Pilot" broadcasts. Men and women have been converted, backsliders restored, and the faith of many weak Christians has been strengthened. Some have gone to the foreign mission field and others are engaged in active Christian work in their own Churches. It is felt that, whatever the cost, the radio work should continue so long as it is being used of God in this wonderful way.

**Home for Dark Children.** Plans have already been drawn up for the proposed Home, though there may be some delay before they are approved by Council and building commenced. However, the site is being cleared now and we hope to commence laying the foundations shortly. Hardly a week goes by without some application for the admittance of dark children and it is imperative to complete this building as early as possible. It will be necessary to form the Sky Pilot Fellowship into a non-profit making Company so that it may be registered and entitled to hold land and buildings; also to enable the work to carry on in perpetuity under the direction of the Council after the death of the Founder. Our Council is at present working out details of this and of the constitution. Possibly an announcement of this may be made at the Fete on October 17th; also an indication may given of the date for the laying of the foundation stone.

**Mission Farm.** This farm is the personal property of Mr. Langford-Smith, who purchased it in 1939 and has built it up and added the many improvements. The Council has decided not to accept responsibility for the direction or financing of this owing chiefly to lack of experience in farming and the many problems attached to running a modern farm.





*Persian Cats and Dahlias on Marella Mission Farm.*

However, it will be used to supply fresh fruit and vegetables, butter, milk and eggs for the Home and also as a training centre for the dark children as planned. It is considered better to keep the Home for dark children separate from the actual farm, although in practice they will be run in conjunction. Any public appeal made will be for the Home, the radio, or such work under the direct control of the Council of the Sky Pilot Fellowship.

**Rest Home for Christian Workers.** In our first leaflet we mentioned that we hope to provide a rest home for missionaries and other Christian workers in need of a thorough rest and change. This plan has not been discarded, though the home for dark children is a first priority. In the past Mr. and Mrs. Langford-Smith have thrown open their own home for this purpose and will continue to do

so when accommodation permits, but with an ever-growing staff the present accommodation is usually taxed to the limit.

**STAFF.** During the year Mr. Don Donsworth was granted leave of absence. Our need at the moment is for experienced farmers, but we hope Mr. Donsworth will be able to resume his position here when the dark children are in residence. We miss him very much as his cheerful disposition and bright Christian witness were an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Wallace McDonald is very happy to have the tractor and rotary hoe at last and already he has cultivated most of the farm and will soon be ready to complete clearing the site for the Home. He also intends to cultivate each grazing paddock in turn and to sow them with rye grass, clover, etc.





*Mr. Joe Jilderts, our Dutch Gardener,  
cuts one of his choice lettuce.*

We have to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. McDonald on the birth of a daughter, Pamela, on September 8th.

Miss Norma Porter, our Secretary, is kept fully occupied with the office work, correspondence, accounts etc. We are pleased that she has decided to give up riding her Auto-byke but do not know whether or not to congratulate her on the purchase of an old model baby Austin! A Christian friend is overhauling it thoroughly and she has joined the N.R.M.A., so we are confident that she will be able to get about safely. Joking apart, the car will be a very real help in the work. "Pixie," Miss Porter's Cocker Spaniel, who appeared with Isabelle on the cover of our last leaflet, is now a proud mother.

We are very fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Joe Jilderts, an experienced Dutch gardener, who has taken charge of our orchard and market garden. Already he has made a great improvement in this branch of the farm

and we hope that in process of time he will make it, if not quite a model of a perfectly kept Dutch farm, at least to resemble it as closely as soil, climate and water supply permit.

It is now about 18 months since Isabelle Thorne, a young dark girl, joined the staff. She has become one of the family and is known to many of our friends. Recently she went to Mt. Victoria for a week's houseparty with the I.S.C.F. and enjoyed it thoroughly, though she was disappointed to have missed the snow! Later she was able to visit Newcastle for a camp re-union.

All our farm workers are paid at the award rates and owing to the high cost of labour it is essential to have fully qualified and conscientious men if the farm is to prove a financial success.

Voluntary workers have done much to help us in various ways and we are deeply grateful to them. The Women's Auxiliary in particular have worked tirelessly. They have held stalls in Parramatta and Sydney besides running two fetes each year; in between time they prepare articles for the fetes. New members are welcome and could get in touch with the President, Mrs. K. Langford-Smith (UW2427) or the Hon. Secretary, Miss P. Mackay ("Sunrise", Mountview Ave., Beverly Hills.)

We would also like to thank Mrs. F. Hutchinson, who spends most of her time at the farm and assists in various ways as a voluntary worker.

**DAM.** As mentioned in our last leaflet, the creek was surveyed by the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission with the object of providing our own water supply. Unfortunately it was discovered that insufficient water for our needs could be stored and the cost was prohibitive. However, the engineers made a new survey of an alternative site and have reported favourably. Two million gallons can be stored, sufficient to irrigate ten acres of garden. We have been granted a licence and we hope that the work may commence shortly.





*Mrs. K. Langford-Smith with pedigreed Turkeys she raised on Marella Mission Farm.*

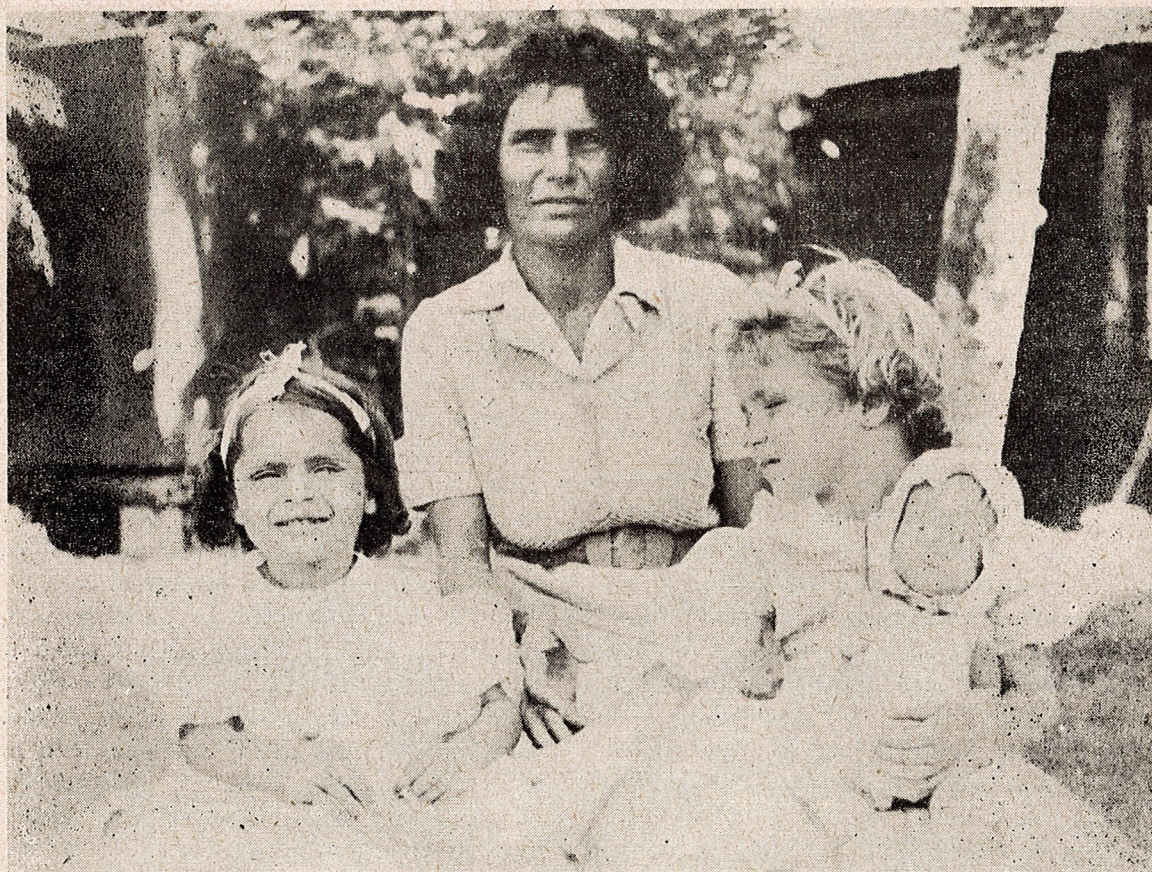
**FINANCE:** The radio work depends entirely on the freewill offerings of Christian friends. Unfortunately the donations received have not been sufficient to cover the cost. Possibly this is due to the fact that 11 a.m. is not as suitable an hour as a mid-day session.

The purchase of a tractor (on terms) and other obligations have been met by an overdraft of £2,000 from the Commonwealth Bank granted to Mr. Langford-Smith. Now that the winter months are over there should be a steady income from the farm. We have hatched about 1500 chickens, besides turkeys and ducks. These are costing a lot to rear but the first of the cockerels will be ready for market shortly and this will relieve the position. Eggs were incubated previously, now they can be sold. We also have 30 young pedigreed pigs which will be offered for sale within a few weeks. There was some delay

in planting our spring crops while we waited for our tractor but these are coming on nicely now. The orchard has been pruned, sprayed and cultivated and we have purchased the cases needed for the fruit. All this means initial outlay and it has strained our finances to the utmost; but very shortly we expect to receive the benefit from the harvest. We have added to our stock Guinea Fowls and Black Leghorns (the setting for the latter having been kindly donated by a friend, a member of the Black Leghorn Club).

It was expected that we could undertake contract work with the tractor in order to pay for it and help with our finance. Unfortunately an unforeseen delay in finalising the finance meant that we had to wait four months before taking delivery. This meant that most farmers had already completed their cultivation and there may not be much work





*"Betty", the first coloured girl to travel in the aeroplane, "Sky Pilot."*

offering until later in the season.

**HOME OFFERING BOXES:** At the request of the Women's Auxiliary we have had little Home Offering Boxes made and we would be glad if interested friends would take one. A small amount, such as 1/- a week, if spread amongst our many friends and listeners would help greatly to finance our programme. Boxes may be obtained from Miss Porter, Marella Mission Farm, Acres Road, Kellyville (UW 2427).

**CAR:** Following an accident in which his car was wrecked Mr. Langford-Smith was without a car for about eight months. This made deputation work very difficult, as he is booked up for every Sunday for about a year ahead. He refused to use any money donated to the Fellowship for the purchase of a car, but we are happy to say that in answer to

prayer he now has a reliable car. He purchased a wrecked Holden and a Christian engineer has repaired and rebuilt it, charging only for the cost of spares. Owing to his generous action a 1950 Holden in excellent condition is now available for the work.

**NEWS BULLETIN:** A monthly news bulletin is duplicated and sent out to all listeners who write in during the current month. It is also sent to any friends who let us know that they would like to receive it regularly. If your name is not on the list and you would like to keep in touch with the work in this way please notify the Secretary, Sky Pilot Fellowship, c/- Station 2CH, 47 York Street, Sydney.

**ADDRESSES.** Included on our mailing list are the names of many friends who signed the petition for the continuance of the Sky Pilot's Log. Owing to the difficulty of deciphering



some signatures it is possible that we have some names or addresses incorrectly spelt. We would be glad to correct our cards if friends notify us of any inaccuracy.

**DRAKE'S DRUM.** This book of short stories taken from the Sky Pilot's Log is still available, price 10/- post free. Each book is autographed by the author, Keith Langford-Smith, and may be obtained by contacting the Secretary, Sky Pilot Fellowship, Station 2CH, 47 York St., Sydney. All profits from the sale of this book go towards our work amongst dark children.

**"BETTY".** The photo on page 7 shows "Betty" with her two eldest children; (for obvious reasons we do not give her real name). Betty was the first half-caste girl to make a trip in the aeroplane "Sky Pilot". She was engaged to a half-caste man at a little tropical township and travelled hundreds of miles to marry him. At Roper River she discovered that all roads had been closed by the wet season; so she had to face the alternative of a five months' wait for the roads to dry up—or a trip in the "Sky Pilot." Somewhat fearfully she chose the aeroplane, and as Mr. Langford-Smith strapped her into the front seat she looked like a martyr going to the stake! It was not the best weather for flying, storms were all around, and the numerous willy-willies and rain squalls made the air very bumpy.

"Are you all right?" the pilot called over the earphones. She nodded but seemed too scared to speak. The pilot opened the throttle and in a few seconds they were circling round to gain height before facing the mountains and scrub that lay between the mission and the township. Before they had been in the air five minutes the little coloured girl had lost all her fear; smiling and excited she pointed out each familiar land-mark as it came into view. There was a strong tail wind blowing at 6,000 feet and the aeroplane made good time with better flying conditions than at a lower altitude. The pilot called over the earphones: "We will be in the town-

ship in a little over an hour."

"Oh, can't you go slower?" came the disappointed reply.

It was necessary to fly round several storms on the way in and in order to "try-out" the passenger, the pilot took her through the outskirts of one of them, so that she could experience the thrill of a few minutes of "flying blind." As the aeroplane shot out of the damp, close atmosphere of the clouds into the brilliant sunshine beyond, the coloured girl was wreathed in smiles; she even pointed to another storm on the right and wanted the pilot to fly through it too.

At the township, the half-caste was the centre of an excited group of blacks and coloured folk. Poor girl! for one brief hour the "outcast" was an envied heroine.

For a time Betty was wonderfully happy. Her first child was born and it seemed that her cup of joy was full. Then came a pathetic letter to the Sky Pilot: "Oh, Moningna, I have sinned and I don't think God can ever forgive me. I didn't want to, but the white man insisted. What am I to do? Do you think God would forgive me if I drowned myself before the baby is born?"

The Sky Pilot did not write. He flew 300 miles to see her and was able to explain that "we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities." When she realised that God is not "coldly sublime and intolerably just", but is a warm and loving Father, she rose from her knees with a smile breaking through her tears and bravely took up her duties and responsibilities.

Years later the Sky Pilot, with his wife, went to see Betty and the photo shown on page 7 was taken. It is of Betty with her two children—one a half-caste and the other a white quadroon.

There are problems facing these coloured girls which only loving sympathy and understanding under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God can solve. Perhaps you would like to share in it? If so the opportunity has come with the establishment of the Mission Farm and Home for dark children.