

SKY PILOT NEWS Aug., 1968

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SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP 20th ANNIVERSARY and SALE OF WORK

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

ACRES ROAD, KELLYVILLE, N.S.W.

Saturday, 26th Oct., 1968

10.30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING, 2.30 p.m. – FREE PARKING
ALL THE USUAL STALLS: REFRESHMENTS AND HOT PIES
AVAILABLE ALL DAY

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, 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., 12.20 p.m., 1.12 p.m.

Depart Kellyville P.O.: 11.50 a.m., 12.45 p.m., 1.23 p.m., 1.53, 4.16, 5.16 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 mailed 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.

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

PLEASE PRAY FOR A FINE DAY

RIVERS AMONG ROCKS: From the Sky Pilot's Log, 2CH Broadcast

It was a very dry year. The ground nuts and yams had failed and most of the native game had left the district. The natives were forced away from the drying waterholes and, weak and thin, had set off across the desert in a long march for food and water. Many of them perished by the way; it was a case of survival of the fittest. To let the strong die for the weak is not nature's way, and these people lived very close to nature.

George and I crossed the desert south of the range. It was not all sandy country — much of it consisted of rough, barren sandstone with stretches of gibber country like Sturt's Stony Desert. It was hard on the horses, especially some of the pack horses that had not been shod. Firewood was scarce and we had to pack water in canteens, even for the horses. We reached a waterhole just about dusk and I rode ahead to stop the packhorses stampeding and making the water unfit to drink. I might have saved myself the trouble; the waterhole was bone dry. When George arrived a few minutes later, he sat rather still on his weary horse and stared at the cracked and dry claypan that should have contained water.

I turned and looked at George. "Looks like another dry camp, mate. No use digging a soak here — only be a waste of energy!"

"Well, Smithy, we'll have to give the horses a drink tonight; that'll about empty the canteens. We must find water tomorrow or else . . ." George broke off and looked around in the gathering dusk. Around us were great hills of shifting sand and a few outcrops of rock. There was practically nothing in the way of vegetation except the hardy porcupine grass, or false spinifex. A little earlier a blood-red sun had set behind the great sand dunes of the desert wasteland. There was not a sign of life as far as the eye could reach. A short distance away the skeletons of a few stunted desert oak and mulga bushes stretched their leafless branches above the drifting sand. There even the spinifex was dead. No sign or trace of bird or beast; no crows or lizards; no flies; not even an ant. No breath of wind to break the awful silence.

George pulled out his tobacco tin, hacked a few junks from his plug and filled his pipe, ramming the tobacco into the carbon-caked brier with square, calloused fingers. He spoke very quietly: "Well, Smithy, it's no use meetin' trouble half way. We've been in worse jams than this before now. One thing, there's plenty of firewood."

"That's something to be thankful for," I replied. "I'll cook enough salt junk to last us a couple of days. It always seems wicked to me to use mulga for a fire; down south it's worth a lot of money polished up a bit; here we use it to

boil the billy."

"Right now I'm more worried about what we put in the billy than what goes under it. I don't like the desert. No, give me the north with the open eucalyptus forest and a few pandanus along the river banks."

"George, don't talk about rivers. Not here."

"Oh well! I'll see to the horses while you get the fire goin'. No need to hobble them — they won't go far tonight."

"Look, George! Over in the west. I'm sure I saw a flash of lightning! There may be a storm."

George swung round and stared into the gathering darkness. "No, I can't see anythin'. Your eyes must be playin' tricks; there's not a cloud in the sky. You can't have a storm without clouds."

But it was a storm. Late that night we lay and watched the lightning playing about the horizon and we knew rain was falling. The sight only depressed us. There was no sound of thunder; the storm was too far away to be of any use to us.

Long before dawn we saddled up and started along the track, hoping to get as far as possible while it was comparatively cool. All too soon the sun rose and we pushed on over the burning sand, hour after hour, till it seemed as if our blood vessels would burst in the heat. We were making towards a huge outcrop of rock. It seemed only two or three miles away, but distances are deceptive in the desert and we travelled ten times that distance before we reached it late in the afternoon. The horses were nearly done; we had to punch them along. I was too stiff to get off my horse without help; hard riding is not much good to a man with a false hip-joint.

George steadied me with his strong arm. "There now, take it easy, Smithy, and lie down for a few minutes. You can see to the horses later; they're too knocked up to move. I'll just poke about a bit and see if I can find water."

"Thanks, George. I saw a wallaby track going to the left a little way back."

"Yes, I saw it too; I'll follow it up. I noticed a few fresh signs of wallabies about, so there must be water somewhere near." The old stockman mounted his horse and in a harsh voice tried to sing, "Wish me luck as you wave me good-bye."

"George," I told him, "if you find water I'll let you sing all night."

It was dark when George returned. He was not singing; one look at his face and I knew he had failed. He threw himself on his swag that I had unrolled ready for him. After a few moments he raised himself on one elbow and spoke in a weary voice:

"Sorry, Smithy, but it's no go. It's got me

beat. I found the main wallaby track and followed it for a couple of miles till it branched away in all directions and finally petered out."

"You must have been following in the wrong direction. Tracks always get stronger as you approach water."

"Oh, I know that! I turned round and followed it the other way, but it leads right up the side of the rocky outcrop. It was gettin' dark and I lost it in the rocks; but you don't find rock pools at the **top** of a fifty foot rock wall. No, Smithy, there's somethin' I can't figure out. I'll have another go at daylight. How are the 'orses?"

"I gave them the last of the water in the canteens; it was hardly enough to wet their lips. We've only got our water bottles left, George. They're full, but a quart won't last long; I could drink it all right now, and then come back for more."

George struggled into a sitting position. "Well, as soon as we've had a bite to eat we'd better turn in and try to sleep. We'll need all our strength tomorrow."

Before turning in I read a couple of chapters from my pocket Bible. In the book of Job I found a passage that seemed to be most appropriate. It read: "There is a path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen . . . He putteth forth His hand upon the rock; He overturneth the mountain by the roots. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and His eye seeth every precious thing." All that night, even in my sleep, the words "rivers among the rocks" kept ringing in my ears. I have always found it well worth while to take notice of any text that seems to echo in my mind in a time of emergency, and next morning I said to George: "Let's climb those rocks. I'm sure we'll find water there somewhere".

George shook his head. "It don't make sense, Smithy. Water always finds the lowest level. How would it get to the top of a tor of rock like that?"

"I don't know; but you tried the other way. Let's try the rock."

"Well, all right, if you say so; but it's a long climb and we haven't any time to waste. Anyhow, we might be able to see somethin' from the top; there may be water on the other side."

We followed the worn pad of the wallaby track and an hour later reached the top. There was no water. George looked round in every direction but there was no sign of water on the other side of the tor either. George remarked on the obvious. "Well, there's nothin' here, Smithy; we'll have to go back and try the other way."

"But," I asked, "why would all these wallabies climb this rock?"

George laughed. "Don't you remember that poem that says:

"'Tis true there's very little grass,
But this a fair exchange is,
The sheep can see a lovely view
By climbin' up the ranges."

"No, George, that doesn't make sense either. I know animals and if I was a wallaby I wouldn't climb this steep rock in the heat just for fun. I'm sure there's water here."

We retraced our steps, passing a rugged ledge of rock worn smooth by the feet of countless wallabies. A little to the right a tiny green shrub was growing out of a crack in the rock. There was nothing unusual in this; but somehow I felt there was something wrong about that bush. While George walked on I waited back to puzzle it out. All at once I realised what it was; the bush was green and every other shrub was silver-grey. I scrambled across the rock and there at the base of the shrub was a tiny hole, no bigger than a quart-pot, but it was full of clear, cool water.

George's impatient voice reached me. "Come on, Smithy, we can't waste any more time here."

"In a minute, George; first I'm going to have a long, cool drink."

George came back up the side of that tor quicker than any rock wallaby. We found later that no matter how much water we bailed out, that tiny pool remained full. We were able to water the horses and fill the canteens. Where the water came from we could never find out; it seemed to spring from the centre of the rock. It certainly was as good as "rivers among rocks".

Some time later I found these words written by an unknown writer: "We never know where God hides His pools. We see a rock, and we cannot guess it is the home of the spring. We see a flinty place, and we cannot tell it is the hiding place of a fountain. God leads me into the hard places, and then I find I have gone into the dwelling place of eternal springs." God knows our need of the wilderness experience. He knows where and how to bring out that which is enduring. The soul has been idolatrous, rebellious; has forgotten God, and with a perfect self-will has said, "I will follow after my lovers." But she did not overtake them. And when she was hopeless and forsaken, God said, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her." Yes, the way to the Promised Land is through the wilderness.

"The word of God came to John in the wilderness." Luke 3:2.

PRAYER MEETING: Our Monthly Prayer Meeting commenced in September 1967 and so has now been conducted for a period of twelve months. The average attendance has been between 17 and 24, which of course includes the older girls and the Mission staff, and this is quite

good seeing most of our supporters live some distance from Kellyville. These Prayer Meetings have been a time of great blessing not only to those who attend but for the many people for whom we have prayed. Over 120 prayer requests have been submitted in the past year and we have had some very wonderful answers to our prayers.

The older children, who attend the Prayer Meeting, join in very well and their simple prayers are very earnest and sweet. After the meeting, which only lasts about an hour, the children join the visitors at supper. This is a most popular part of the evening, as is the time of fellowship afterwards. The children look forward to each meeting eagerly.

Mrs. Langford-Smith conducts each evening a short period of Bible study and prayer for all the children who have made decisions for Christ. The children join in this and pray in turn. It is very good training for them, and there has been a marked improvement in their behaviour in general.

AFRICAN SAFARI: Through the courtesy of the Lions Club of Sydney all our children were taken to the lions' park at Warragamba where they were entertained to lunch and had the opportunity of seeing the lions in these wonderful surroundings. We managed, with the help of friends, to transport the children to Parramatta where a bus picked them up and took them to Warragamba. On the return trip the bus came via Kellyville and the children only had a short walk from the bus stop. We are most grateful to the Lions' Club for making this pleasant outing possible.

STREET STALL: A further Street Stall on 19th August in Parramatta brought in \$96.97. Once again we have to thank the members of our Women's Auxiliary for their splendid effort on our behalf.

BRIAN: Brian, a little sub-normal boy, came to us when he was twenty-one months of age. He had been five months in Moree District Hospital and he came to us direct from the Hospital. Previous to this, in his short lifetime, he had been in Hospital four times before because of neglect and malnutrition. When he first arrived he covered his face with his hands, afraid of what life had in store for him. But he settled down very happily and stayed with us for almost ten years. During the latter months of his stay with us he attended the Inala School for sub-normal children and on the 9th February this year he became a permanent boarder at the school through

the co-operation of the Aborigines Welfare Board. He seems to be getting along very well at the school, but (as is only natural considering the many years he spent here) he sometimes gets very homesick. We are very glad that he has been able to spend a day at the Mission Farm on several occasions during the school holidays. We would be glad if you will remember Brian in your prayers.

CAR STICKERS: We still have a number of car stickers at 30 cents, post free. These depict an Aboriginal boy watching the billy boil on a fire in the open. They are very attractive and a great number have been already sold.

BOYS' DORMITORY WING: The building of this wing has progressed very well and we are confident that it will be completed by the next sale of work on 26th October. A photo of the building in progress of construction is included in the July copy of the Sky Pilot News, but this does not show the building to advantage. Many of the windows overlook the water of the lake and with the willow trees, now coming into leaf again, it is a very pretty setting. There is a covered walk-way from the new building to the children's dining room but otherwise the Girls' Wing and the Boys' Wing will be entirely separate and self-contained. There are staff rooms and toilets and bathrooms in the new wing; also a large playroom for small boys in wet weather.

As mentioned previously the Bank has granted us a short term loan to complete this building but we have to find the money sooner or later. If you would care to have a share in this great advance please mark your donation for the Building Fund.

TELEVISION: Although we have a Television Room in the new wing the boys will be without television for the present. We would be glad to hear of any friend who has a set that they would care to donate; or of any Church or Organisation which would like to make the provision of a television a project for the next year.

SALE OF WORK: The spring Sale of Work will be held, D.V., on Saturday, 26th October 1968. We would be very glad of gifts for the various stalls. These may be railed to Marella Mission Farm, Parramatta Railway Station or brought out to the Mission Farm in time to be sorted and priced ready for the sale. The Mission children will be singing, as usual, at the Public Meeting at 2.30 p.m. Above all, please pray for a fine day, as so much depends on the weather; God has been very good to us in the past.