

SKY PILOT NEWS

AUGUST, 1960

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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, 29th OCT., 1960

10.30 a.m. — 5 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING, 2.30 p.m.

ALL THE USUAL STALLS: REFRESHMENTS 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, slippery dip, and rides on Mission ponies.

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. (Rouse Hill bus)

1.05 p.m.

Depart Kellyville P.O.

1.22 p.m.

1.52 p.m.

5.07 p.m.

6.42 p.m.

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, YA 2427.

GARDEN BELONGA GOD: 2CH BROADCAST FROM THE SKY PILOT'S LOG

Once, the Lord took a small boy's lunch — and fed 5,000 people. The Lord always takes all that we give. But when He took the five scones and two sardines of the small boy's lunch, do you think He left the lad hungry? I can imagine that lad having the meal of his life, for the Lord is no man's debtor. In Psalm 50, God says: "If I were hungry I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof."

To-day's story is about a little black boy who believed that the bush was the garden of the Lord, or—as he put it—garden belonga God.

The black children hurried out of the Mission Church and ran away, leaving Quingelarwe a lonely and forlorn figure in the shade of a crimson-flowering poinciana tree. He was not happy. Everything was new and strange; even the grotesque white man's clothes, that chafed his black skin, hung like a weight about his neck, and made him feel a prisoner. He tilted his head back and looked at the top of the Church steeple, a dark outline pencilled against the bright tropic sky.

He was a little afraid of the Church. Before he came to this Mission in Arnhem Land, the only buildings he knew were the paper-bark mia mias and bough shelters of the bush blacks. To him, this tall, dark, concrete-floored building was the abode of the spirits. During the morning service, he felt uneasy whenever the big door was closed, shutting out the bright, friendly sunshine; and at evensong it was worse, because the smokey oil-lamps swung from the ceiling caused fitful, flickering shadows to move like gigantic beings from the shadow world of the eternal dream-time of long ago.

Quingelarwe turned and watched the big, friendly river that flowed at the bottom of the garden. Only that day the teacher had said to him: "Quingelarwe, do you know who made the river?" And he had replied: "All about talk kangaroo bin make'im river."

The teacher had scolded him and said: "Don't be silly. You've been a mission boy long enough to know better! I'm ashamed of you. Now, you say, after me: 'God made the river, the trees, and everything in nature.'"

Quingelarwe had done as he was told; but in his heart he did not believe what he had repeated. His father had told him it was the kangaroo, and so did the old medicine man, who knew everything.

A thin wisp of smoke ascended on the other side of the river. Quingelarwe sniffed the familiar scent of burning gum leaves, and his hungry stomach murmured at the thought of fat goanna roasting on live coals, and he yearned

for forbidden things. The other side of the river was out of bounds. The teacher didn't like it; perhaps she didn't understand . . . "You mission boys must not cross the river," she had said. "It's a dreadful place. Only the heathen live there, and you mission boys must not mix with them. Now, remember what I say — *don't cross the river.*"

Quingelarwe did not say anything. Perhaps the teacher did not understand; that must be it. Quingelarwe's tribe belonged to across the river, and it was a happy country. There was plenty of food there; goanna, flying-fox, beautiful billabongs covered with lilies, and there were ground-nuts, yams, wild currants, and native oranges . . . Quingelarwe wanted to be a good mission boy, to please his teacher, and not make God angry; but sometimes it was hard, because he felt terribly homesick. It had been worse lately. Sometimes he couldn't eat his food because of that other hunger in his heart. Even teacher noticed it, for she had asked: "Quingelarwe, what's the matter with you? Are you sick? You never play with the others — only mope about all day. You must have malaria."

Quingelarwe had tried to explain. He couldn't say that he had an ache in his heart, because he didn't know he had a heart. Something hurt inside him; it must be his stomach. He tried to explain by saying: "Please, teacher, me got no good bingy."

That was as near as he could get to it; but it made matters worse, because teacher gave him quinine — bitter-tasting water — to drink. It didn't do him any good, only made his ears buzz like a vicious mob of mosquitoes.

Quingelarwe wandered into the garden, past the paw paw and mulberry trees, through the rows of staked tomatoes, and into the cool shade of the banana plantations. He was not allowed to touch the fruit — it belonged to the white people — but sometimes he had to weed the garden or carry buckets of water to the thirsty trees. He loved the garden, but was afraid to look hard at the fruit, in case someone saw him and thought he was going to steal. It looked nicer fruit than what grew in the bush, but it was only to look at.

Quingelarwe sat on a log and dangled his feet in the water. The rapids sang to him, and the crayfish nibbled his bare toes. He longed to make a sudden grab and catch them, but it was Sunday, and therefore wicked to catch fish or hunt birds or play games. . . . The Sunday School lesson had been about the creation this afternoon, and teacher said that God made the whole world, and men and animals, and the bush for His garden. Quingelarwe liked to think

that the bush was God's garden. It was different from the white man's garden, for God did not seem to mind when the wild fruit was picked—even on Sundays. Somehow, God seemed nearer in the bush, but, of course, that was impossible, for God lived at the mission. But in the bush Quingelarwe could eat when he was hungry, sleep when he was tired, play when he wanted to, and there were no school or work bells to listen for, but always the warm sun kissing his naked body.

He thought of the sweet water-lily roots fresh from roasting; of the crisp, juicy lily stems, and the satisfying damper made from the ground-up seeds. It was all better than the thin soup from the mission kitchen. The missionaries said that God gave them their food. It was hard to understand, when God owned so much, why He did not make the soup a little thicker.

Idly he wondered what God ate. God never seemed to touch anything from the mission garden; but then, of course, the bush was His garden. Probably when He was hungry He ate there. But He was always careful to leave plenty for others.

A bell rang in the compound, and Quingelarwe jumped to his feet and climbed the steep path that led from the river. As he walked through the garden his keen nostrils caught a new, strangely sweet smell. Led unerringly by his nose, he found a beautiful white bud that was just opening into a flower. It did not belong to the fruit trees and was not good to eat, so he pulled it, and carried it in his hand as he walked up to the soup kitchen.

The school teacher was new to the work, but she had very strong ideas as to how to run the mission. She thought that the Superintendent was too easy-going, and not nearly strict enough with the natives. She was glad of a new opportunity to tackle him now. "I do hope," she said, "that you won't let any more of those bush blacks from across the river leave their children here. They are positively impossible."

The Superintendent smiled quietly. "What is it now?" he asked. "You have to make allowances for them, of course; but they are not really bad. They're just boys and girls, the same as any others. When you've been here a little longer you'll be more patient with them. What is the trouble now?"

"It's Quingelarwe," the teacher replied. "He's a perfect little heathen, and his example will ruin the other children. He picked a beautiful frangi-pani that was just coming into bloom. As if he didn't know better! I gave him a good thrashing, but I doubt if it will do him any good. I think . . . but look there! Upon my soul!"

Quingelarwe was coming along the garden path as naked as God made him, carrying a tiny

spear in one hand and his unwanted mission clothes in the other. He drew himself up to his full height and lifted eyes that were determined and unafraid.

"Me go 'way now, Boss," he said with simple dignity. "Me go 'way cross river. Me home belonga bush. God can't punish me when me take 'im flower and fruit. Garden belonga God more better."

* * *

Over thirty years have gone by since Quingelarwe crossed the river to the forbidden country. Mission methods have changed considerably since then, just as they have since the days that Oliver Twist dared to ask for more.

It is difficult to realise that the time is not long past when the aborigines were considered to have no social organisation, and no culture or art. Few people bothered to learn their language, or to study them with sympathy and understanding. Little was known about their laws and customs. They are a shy and sensitive race; and when the white man laughed at their beliefs, they retired into a stony silence. They saw their sacred places desecrated, and with passive quietness they sat, with broken hearts, amongst the ruins of all that was precious to them.

But at last people are beginning to realise the claims of the aborigines and are willing to give them a chance in life. At Marella Mission Farm our first aim was to make this a home, rather than an institution; a place where the children would feel as free to ask for a second helping as our own children would; a place they could consider their own by natural right as sons and daughters, rather than as outcasts accepting charity. Here they receive love and security, a Father and Mother, and a chance to grow into normal citizens and take their place in the community.

There are no grand buildings here; it is a farm, with the usual farm buildings; but at least there is always plenty to eat. They don't have to wish that "God would make the soup a little thicker!" Plenty of milk, eggs, vegetables and meat is available. They attend the Castle Hill Public School and learn to mix with white children, as well as with those of their own colour. It is not as good as true family life; but it is as near to it as love and care can make it.

THE DARK CHILDREN: An outbreak of measles meant that about a dozen of the children at a time were either just recovering from, or just getting the disease. It is always difficult keeping small children in bed, but the dark children are very good patients, taken all round. At the same time, a lot of extra work

was involved. As measles can be very serious with aborigines, we had to have medical attention; but now all are on the road to recovery. Those that escaped so far may yet go down one by one, but we are hoping not.

PEARL MUNRO: Pearl, who has been assisting Isabelle, left us on the fourth of this month to get married. We wish her God's richest blessing in her new life. We miss her very much. She was always so ready to help, and her pleasant smile was ever-present.

JOHN DIXON: John will soon be fifteen and able to leave school. He came to us under exceptional circumstances, mostly because he had been playing truant from school and was in danger of being placed in a reformatory. In spite of one lapse, he has been very good, and we received encouraging reports from the Welfare Department. It is now possible for him to live at home with his mother, and he left us this month. The improvement in his character was most marked, and we pray that he will continue to be a credit to his teachers.

VANESSA: When Ralph was in hospital there was a little dark girl in the same ward. When she saw Mrs. Langford-Smith call to see Ralph and he called her "Mummy," she said: "But you are not really and truly his mother, are you?" "Oh, yes," was the reply, "I am 'Mummy' to all the dark children at the Mission." Very wistfully, Vanessa said: "I wish I had a Mummy."

Ralph was cured and came back to us; a few months later, in the providence of God, Vanessa was also discharged, and she was sent to us. When she realised where she was, she ran to Mrs. Langford-Smith, threw her arms around her, and said: "Now you can be my Mummy, too." She has certainly made herself at home here, and she has plenty of assurance now.

HOLIDAYS: As mentioned previously, we are most anxious to rent a cottage near the sea for two or three weeks in January, so that we can take all the children away together. It is difficult, we know, to obtain a cottage at that time of the year; as we also require grounds near the cottage on which to erect tents for the older children, this is an added difficulty. However, we are still hoping it may be possible, and would be glad to hear from any friends who might know of such a cottage.

PICKING UP PARCELS: As mentioned in the June *News*, we badly need friends with some storage space available to accept the care of parcels from their district that may be left

with them. In most cases, the parcels are not very large (we do not mean furniture!), so it would not involve a great deal of space. We also need friends with cars who, from time to time, could pick up the parcels from their centre and bring them out to the Mission Farm. Already we have heard from several friends who are willing to do one or both of these things; but we need others in different districts. At present we have no one in the Manly district, for instance. If you are able to help us in this way, we will be very glad if you will contact us as soon as possible.

When possible, of course, it is better to rail the parcels to Parramatta Railway Station, where we are able to pick them up ourselves at frequent intervals. But some people live too far from a railway to be able to do this.

Please let us know as soon as possible (1) if you are willing to accept and store parcels at your home, and (2) if you are able, occasionally, to pick up articles at one of these centres and bring them out here.

RALLY AND SALE OF WORK: We do ask you, if at all possible, to be present at our next Rally to be held at the Mission Farm (D.V.) on Saturday, 29th October, as advertised. This is possibly the most important Rally in our history. The Mission Farm has been going ahead so rapidly of recent months, and with our building programme well under way, we are going to need all the money we can possibly raise in the next few weeks. It will cost about £1,000 to provide the new annexe, ready for occupation by the dark children. To us, this is a large sum; but when we consider the usual appeal for many thousands of pounds for Homes run by other organisations, this appears a very modest amount. The aboriginal children are our responsibility. They do not ask very much; just a simple dwelling and adequate food and clothing. We have taken their home, shattered their social organisation, and, in some tragic cases, ruined their lives and happiness. As Christian people, it is our duty to make some small sacrifice for them. Christmas is coming, and soon our own children, well cared for and happy in their home surroundings, will be thinking of the happiness that Christmas brings. We do not grudge a few shillings — or even pounds — spent on our own children; yet, if every subscriber to this little paper gave £1 as a Christmas offering, we could house twice the number of children we have now. It is a challenge to us. Are we going to do anything about it, or will our Christmas be an empty one, with Christ and His dark children left outside? It is up to us.