

SKY PILOT NEWS

APRIL,
1975

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SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP

RALLY & SALE OF WORK

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

MARELLA MISSION FARM

ACRES ROAD, KELLYVILLE, N.S.W.

Saturday, 3rd May, 1975

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 Mother's Day 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 Bus Terminus. The Mission Farm is about one mile from the Terminus, but transport between the Mission Farm and Kellyville Terminus will be arranged for the following buses.

Depart Parramatta Station: 9.10 a.m., 10.45 a.m., 11.40 a.m.

Depart Kellyville Terminus: 11.28 a.m., 12.45 p.m., 1.28 p.m., 1.44 p.m., 4.14 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 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, as early as possible.

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

PLEASE PRAY FOR A FINE DAY

JUNGLE BEAUTY: Sky Pilot's Log, 2CH Broadcast, K. Langford-Smith

Some of you may have read books written many years ago by Dr. Gordon, better known as Ralph Connor. One was called "The Sky Pilot of No Man's Land". It was this book that first suggested the name Sky Pilot for my aeroplane. Amongst my prized possessions are letters from Ralph Connor who was very interested in my aeroplane work in Arnhem Land and with whom I corresponded up till the time of his death. One of his books was about Gwen, and today's story is a slight echo of the moral of that story.

George and I had left the open eucalyptus forests for the jungle country, and everything was new and strange to us. Of course we recognised many of the trees and plants of Arnhem Land, but here in the high-rainfall belt they grew to perfection. We came out of the mangrove swamps to the jungle proper. Never have I seen a sight to compare with it. Here were pandanus palms with their massive orange coloured fruits; graceful umbrella trees, decorated with deep red; hibiscus bushes with flowers like beautiful yellow funnels. A little to the right, domed bushes of glossy green showed that the native cabbage flourished. On the other side were bloodwoods, red stringy-bark and the shapely melaleuca. George was speechless for a few minutes, then he spoke — almost in a whisper.

"Smithy, is this real? I ain't dreamin' am I? I never thought that a place like this existed outside of heaven."

"It's real, George. A little bit of unspoiled creation at which the angels sang for joy. Look at those beech oaks. They seem to be singing at the very joy of it all. Listen! You can hear them murmuring and sighing."

"Yes, I guess it's so beautiful it — it hurts! Look at that white cedar down there. It's all covered with purple flowers just like, well like lilac!"

"It is beautiful, George, but what about that flame tree — not a single green leaf on it — just a red robe like Father Christmas!"

"I say, Smithy, I know a lot of these here trees. At first I thought they was somethin' different, but it's just that they grow better here. There are nut-megs and quandongs and milk-woods and over there is a bean tree and right alongside is a native ginger."

"George, what's that tree behind you? It's got a funny grey bark and sage green leaves. And the flowers or florets or whatever you call

them are massed in clumps like sunflowers."

"Well, I don't know its proper name but we call 'em gingeess. Maybe that's the Aboriginal name for 'em. There's a pretty good muster of wattles too, and there's a cockatoo apple — oh yes, and a swamp mahogany. Look at them lawyer vines, thicker than my leg, some of 'em and climbin' all over the place. Some of 'em has pods about a yard long."

"It's a pity they have such cruel barbs; they're like great incurving hooks. They call them 'Come-back-quicks' and its a good name too."

"I'll say it is. Many a deep cut I've had from them too. But they look pretty enough if you keep clear of 'em. Say, are those fig trees with roots growin' down from the branches? Some of the roots is bigger than the trunk almost."

"They're some sort of fig but I don't rightly know what variety. But look at the crimson mistletoe hanging down in great festoons. Did you ever see anything more colourful?"

"Well, Smithy, it's hard to say what is the prettiest of the lot, but if you ask me I think that vine — or is it a fern? — that grows right up into the trees at the edge of the jungle is the most wonderful thing as ever I seen."

"It certainly is something I have never seen before. I think it must be the climbing fern they call **Lygodium** — or the Fern of God. George, we ought to take off our hats in a place like this."

"I feel like goin' down on me knees, Smithy, that's how I feel!"

And then I noticed the birds — tiny sun birds of yellow and purple flitting round the hibiscus; sulphur crested cockatoos staining their breasts red as with blood as they feasted on the flame trees. Drongos, Torres Straits pigeons, honey-eaters, wood swallows — the place was alive with birds of all colours, shapes and sizes up to the scrub fowl that was scratching in the decaying leaves regardless of our presence. We could have stayed in that spot with pleasure, but we could not afford to spend the night there and were forced to move on.

It was a long time before George and I saw that place again. When we did so we paused in horror. Gone were the trees and the birds. Tractors, explosives and fire had reduced our fairyland to a clearing already torn by the plough. A white man came to meet us. "Say, fellows," he greeted, "I'm real glad you happened along. What do you think of my clearin'? Ain't done too bad, have I? Soon be ready for

plantin'. It was a lot of work, but I won through. I haven't been 'ere long but I've made a lot of improvements, I 'ave."

"Improvements!" George spluttered. "They ought to shoot you, they ought, for makin' a mess like this of the jungle! You're worse than a blinkin' murderer."

"Say, are you balmy?" exclaimed the astonished farmer. "This ain't a mess; this is a clearin' and though I says it myself as oughtn't, there's not another man could have done more in the time than I 'ave. You've got to cut away the jungle if you're ever goin' to do any good with the land. Oh, yes, I dare say it was beautiful to look at before, but you can't eat beauty. No, I guess PRETTY TREES NEVER FED HUNGRY PEOPLE."

I didn't see that spot again. Had I done so I might have seen paw-paws and bananas, snow white cotton bursting from the pods, golden maize; pineapples, custard apples and mangoes. Maybe the spot is beautiful again with a beauty that can feed hungry people. I don't know. But I do know that in most lives there comes a time when God looks for fruit and finds nothing but leaves. It may mean that the things we loved, even the good things and the beautiful things in our lives, have to be uprooted and cleared away.

To us, maybe, our lives are like that clearing; bare and burnt and torn by furrows of pain and we cry out to God to know why this must be. In our blindness we cannot see that the plough must come if we are to bear fruit. Oh, it hurts, I know, but love is behind it; and one day, if we submit willingly and trustingly there will be a new beauty in our lives. Not the wild jungle beauty that never fed a hungry soul, but the beauty of ripening fruits for the feeding of our fellow men. We read in the eleventh chapter of Mark that Jesus was hungry. "And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves." Nothing but leaves! Does that describe your life, or mine?

Mrs. K. LANGFORD-SMITH: At the time this leaflet goes to the printers there is no final news about Mrs. Langford-Smith's condition. After a period in Sydney Hospital for tests she had to go to the Royal North Shore Hospital for further tests. This month she and her husband are to see the heart Specialist for his verdict and nothing definite can be reported until after that visit. However it is known that one

valve at least is not functioning properly and it is almost certain that an operation will be necessary to replace the valve with a plastic one. Any heart operation is serious and at her time of life it is not to be undertaken lightly; however, the Heart Specialist has made very full tests and she must be guided by his advice.

Mrs. Langford-Smith wishes to thank the many friends who have written to her or sent messages by phone; especially those who are remembering her in their prayers. This has been a great encouragement and uplift to her at this anxious time. She is in God's hands and He never makes mistakes.

SALE OF WORK: The next Sale of Work will be the Autumn Sale, set down for Saturday 3rd May, as advertised in this leaflet. We would value your prayers for a fine day as so much depends on the weather in an out-door function.

We would be grateful for gifts for the various Stalls, especially aprons, cakes and plants; but anything saleable will be gratefully received. Parcels may be railed to Marella Mission Farm, C/- Railway Station, Parramatta; or posted to Marella Mission Farm, Box 29, Post Office, Castle Hill; or better still, delivered to the Mission Farm, Acres Road, Kellyville before the day of the Sale.

Because of rising costs and the steep increase in wages our limited resources are strained to the limit; we have to depend on the results of the Sales of Work to enable us to catch up on arrears and to meet future commitments.

THE OLDER CHILDREN: It is encouraging to hear, from time to time, from older children who have left Marella and taken their place in the community. Besides those mentioned in our February issue we have heard from Wendy, Rita, Beverley and Jennifer amongst the girls; and Les, Mervyn and Cedric amongst the boys. Some of these had heard about the illness of "Mum" and were quick to respond. Others are away in the country but they have sent messages of good wishes to us recently.

Miss HEATHER WARWICK: Mrs. Warwick's daughter, Heather, will be 21 this year. Some time ago she joined her mother and Mr. and Mrs. Langford-Smith who with two of our supporters made a trip to Darwin by car. This started a yearning to see other parts of Australia while she was young and unattached. Recently, together with a girl friend, Heather set off in her little car for the north. We have heard that they have reached Cairns safely and are at present staying just out of the township in a

house they have rented. We wish them both every blessing and we would value your prayers for their future. Naturally we are anxious to think of two young girls on their own, especially with so many reports of violence on the roads, but they are in God's care and we know that He will not fail.

WRAPPING LEAFLETS: Each time the "Sky Pilot News" is published there is a lot of work involved. Nearly 4,000 copies have to be folded and pasted down ready for the mail. We are most grateful to voluntary helpers who assist in this work. Many hands make light work and recently we have had several new workers. We are indebted to the members of the Karingal Club of Baulkham Hills, as well as friends from the Church of England at Baulkham Hills, and Leigh Memorial Methodist Church from Parramatta. Some of our staff and the older girls also help in this work.

FRUIT FLY: This year our Farm Manager, Mr. Alan Greentree, has waged an incessant war against fruit fly. Because of abandoned or neglected fruit trees in this district the fruit fly had become a very real menace. However, this year the fruit from Marella trees has been remarkably free and the children have been able to use many bushels of fruit from our own trees. Often the children have two pieces of fruit per day and this means nearly five dozen per day or thirty-five dozen per week, which represents a lot of fruit.

EASTER CARDS: Many friends sent us Easter cards which were very much appreciated. We have so many friends and supporters now that it is not possible to send out Easter or Christmas cards to the many we would like to; however we trust you all had a very blessed Easter and we pray for God's richest blessing throughout the whole of the year.

The Marella children are great on Easter and Christmas cards. The little girls take hours making these cards, painting them, and presenting them to "Mum", "Dad", and other members of the staff. For a week before Easter until a week after these cards come in, lovingly prepared by little hands. Sometimes, especially at Christmas, they are accompanied by small gifts; perhaps a second-hand toothbrush, a half used cake of soap, or sometimes a partly used bottle of scent or something that they themselves have received as a gift. The Aborigines love to share things and we could all learn a lot from them.

STAFF NEEDS: To secure suitable staff to look after the children is always a very real

problem. We have a great many applications from both men and women to fill any farm vacancies; but when it comes to domestic work it is another story. The domestic workers have to commence early in the morning and they work late at night. Though they are able to have time off during the day, when the children are at school, they are on call 24 hours of the day. If a child has toothache, or feels ill, or is frightened by a bad dream, or a thousand and one causes, the staff worker is called.

If one of our worker leaves without notice because of illness or for private reasons Mrs. Langford-Smith has to sleep in the Girls' Wing while "Aunty Alice" (who has been with us about 9 years) sleeps in the Boys' Wing. In the past Heather Warwick has often relieved Mrs. Langford-Smith and has supervised the Girls' Wing. It is remarkable how God always provides someone in an emergency.

Recently the young man who was supervising the boys left without notice and the position looked desperate. However, that very day, Miss Julie Whitfield, who had been our Land Girl before she left to take up studies at the Technical College, called with a case of oranges for the children. When she learned of our emergency she immediately volunteered to fill the gap until we were able to replace her. At that time her studies were at night only, and she was able to help out during the day time and sleep in the Boys' Wing at night. As Mrs. Langford-Smith had to go to hospital this was a wonderful provision, and we are deeply grateful to Julie.

A young married couple is coming to supervise the Boys' Wing this month, and as Julie is commencing a full time position connected with her studies, this will fit in very well. Mrs. Walton, who was previously on our staff, has kindly agreed to help us until this change takes place and after that for the two days each week when the young couple have their days off. We are grateful to all our friends for their help, and we praise God that He works through human agencies.

CONCLUSION: The year is well advanced already and it promises to be another year of advance in our work, even though some business matters are still held up. We do not have to face our problems alone; God has promised to undertake for us and it is in His strength and with the assurance of His presence that we face the future.