

SKY PILOT NEWS

APRIL, 1962

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THE BANDICOOT: From the Sky Pilot's Log 2CH Broadcast

George and I were mustering, and Peter had joined us for a few days. Peter, the man who was nearly white, according to those who lived in Arnhem Land, was a fair rider, but no one would call him an outstanding horseman. He was cautious, and lacked the nerve required for galloping after wild cattle in the scrub. However, George put him in charge of the cattle already mustered, and he proved dependable as a shepherd, or "tailer" of cattle, as it is called.

It was barely daylight when George rolled out of his net and yelled for Lefthand to go after the horses. We followed the old stockman's example and also rolled out of our stuffy cheese-cloth mosquito nets. As George strode through the long grass, wet with dew, a startled bandicoot shot out of a clump of grass and, in a wild effort to avoid George, rushed headlong into Peter's net, and was tangled hopelessly in the folds of the cheese-cloth. George came back as Peter picked up the animal, and held it tightly, in spite of the powerful kicks from its long hind legs.

"Well," said George, "you trapped him nicely. He's good, and fat, too. Bandicoot isn't bad eatin', and it'll make a change from salt junk."

"It would be a shame to eat this one," I observed. "It's one of the large Northern bandicoots, and rather rare. The Museum would be pleased to have a specimen. Let me pickle it and send it down with my next consignment."

"Hang the Museum," said George, impatiently. "I'm hungry, and I just fancy a bit of bandicoot. You can have the next one, but I'm going to eat this fellow."

"No, you're not. If you eat it, you'll forget it ten minutes after the meal. If I pickle it, it will be preserved for all time."

"Not on your life," said George. "I'm more interested in bein' preserved myself. If I don't eat, I'll fade away; I'm losin' weight as it is."

"Losing weight!" I exclaimed. "I like that! You're getting positively fat. If you eat rich food like bandicoot, it will only do you harm. For your own sake, I won't let you eat this one."

"I don't care if I get fat, I'm going to eat that bandicoot. I tell you I saw it first, and it's mine. I'll roast it in . . . well, I'm hanged if Peter hasn't been and gorn and let it go! You clumsy idiot, Peter, what did you let it go for?"

"It was my bandicoot," Peter said, simply. "I caught it in my net."

"How did it get away from you, Peter?" I asked.

"It didn't get away. I let it go."

"You let it go!" George exclaimed. "Upon my soul, I don't know what you're comin' to, Peter. I wanted that for breakfast, and you let it go! Now I'll have to eat salt junk again."

"You let it go?" I asked. "And that was a valuable specimen that any Museum would be glad to have. You had no right to let it go."

"It had two babies in its pouch," Peter explained. "It was a living creature, and it had its life to live, just like you and me."

"But hang it all," said George, "it was only a bandicoot."

"Maybe it was," Peter admitted. "But its life was important to it. I could feel its heart beating against my hand. It was very frightened. Maybe it was worried about its babies. It tried so hard to get away safely with them, but it hadn't counted on my net. It wasn't fair. I let it go, so that it will have a chance to rear its babies and live out its little life and be happy."

"I think you are a fool," George said, in disgust. "You're getting sentimental."

"I'm sorry you are disappointed, but I'm glad I let the bandicoot go. You fellows can't understand like I can, because you're both white."

"Of course we're both white," George admitted. "But so are you, if it comes to that, or you're so close to it that it doesn't matter. But what has bein' white got to do with lettin' a bandicoot go?"

"The bandicoot was asking me to let it go. I could see the question in its eyes. I couldn't say no to it."

"There must be something behind all this," I observed. "What is it all about, Peter?"

"I don't think you could understand. You are whites and you can do what you like with your life, and be what you like; but me, I am

different. I cannot do what I want to, and I cannot be what I want to. Everywhere I turn life says 'no' to me. That thought came to me, and so I couldn't say no to the frightened little animal."

"You're talking through your hat," George said. "How do you mean that life says 'no' to you all the time?"

"You say that I am almost white," Peter explained. "So I am; but I'm not really white. If I want to live as a white man, life says: 'No, you can't do that, you're coloured.' If I want to be a half-caste, they say to me, 'You're not yellow, like us; you are nearly white, and you think you are better than us.'"

"That sounds tough," George admitted, "but you're only imagining it."

Peter shook his head. "No, it is quite true. And if I want to go bush and be a black man, they say: 'No, you can't be one of us; you belong to the whites, and you have never been initiated.'"

"Of course you're not a black. Your skin is as white as mine. You'd pass for a white man any day."

"Sometimes I might," Peter agreed. "But white people know that I am coloured. If I want to marry a white girl, she remembers that I am coloured, and she is afraid and . . . she turns away from me."

"You're still upset about that white girl who took all your savings and then dumped you. Well, why couldn't you marry a half-caste?"

"Because half-castes don't think or act the same way as I do. They are sometimes white in their outlook, but sometimes they want to join in the corroboree and share in the tribal life. Me, I am different. I don't want to take part in a corroboree. But if I want to write books or paint pictures, I can't do it. Inside me there is a big — what would you call it? — a big hunger to do something worth while. But I couldn't really do it."

"You mean," I suggested, "that you have artistic longings; you want to express yourself in words, or music, or painting; but it is only a yearning, you really haven't the ability?"

"Yes," said Peter, "that is it. I want to be what I am not, what I never can be. Life says 'no' every time."

"That's nonsense," George told him. "You can be a stockman, or anything you like."

"I could be a stockman, yes; but I don't want to be a stockman. The things I want to be, I can't. I want to be brave, but when the time comes to prove that I am brave, I get frightened and . . . and I find that in spite of what I want to be, I am really no good in danger; I'm a coward."

"It's what I said," George repeated. "You're still upset over that white girl who treated you

badly. You think because she turned you down that you are no good. No girl is worth all that misery. You'll get over it in time, don't worry. Some day you'll be glad that you didn't marry her, after all."

"That is not true," Peter protested. "But I do not complain. She did quite right not to marry me; I could never have been good enough for her. But that's what I've been trying to tell you. A white girl won't marry me because I am coloured, and a coloured girl won't be happy with me because I am nearly white, so she won't marry me, either."

"Of course she would! Any half-caste girl would snap you up at the first suggestion of an offer."

"You don't know that," Peter said, quietly. "And anyhow, I don't want to marry a half-caste girl. They are different from me; they think differently and act differently. No, I am the only one of my kind in this country. All my life I have wanted to do things and be things, but life says 'no'. Sometimes I think if it would only be 'yes' just for once, I wouldn't mind so much. That is why I felt sorry for the bandicoot. George wanted to eat it, and you wanted to put it in a Museum; but the bandicoot was frightened, and its heart beat against my hand. It looked up at me and asked me to let it go. I did not mean to let it go at first, but its eyes pleaded with me. They said: 'Say yes just this once; give me another chance to save my babies.' And I thought of all the times life had said 'no' to me and . . . and I said 'yes' to the bandicoot, and let my fingers loose. She nestled close to my hand and rubbed her nose against my fingers, and then she was gone. Just like that."

"I get what you're drivin' at," George agreed. "And I understand how you felt. I'm real glad you let that bandicoot go. If I'd eaten that animal I'd . . . well, I'd have felt like a cannibal."

"I'd have liked to have seen it in a museum," I remarked, "but life is more than science, after all. I'm glad you let it go."

Peter looked relieved. "I thought maybe you'd both think that way if I explained.. It's hard for people to understand when life has always said 'yes' to their requests."

George laughed. "I guess we've got a lot to be thankful for," he admitted, "and life is a bit tough on a man who wants to be all white, but can't; but you're wrong if you think we get everything we ask for. There's lots of times I haven't got what I wanted. Life can be terrible hard at times. Sometimes it gives you pretty near everythin' you ask for . . . except one thing; and that's usually the thing you want most of all. I used to think that way when little Lily went and drowned herself in my billabong. I don't talk about it much, but I'd have

given everythin' I possess to have stopped that. But no, I couldn't; I was too late."

"Peter," I added, "you're wrong if you think your answer in life will always be 'no'. Nature only cares for the species, but God loves the individual. He has a plan for your life, as well as mine, and if you will let Him work it out, you will find great happiness and contentment in this life. More than that, God wants to provide for you in eternity. There won't be any disappointments then. You won't strive after the unobtainable, or long for what is beyond your reach. When you knock to enter the answer will not be 'no'. There, all the wrongs of this life will be righted. The answer, even for you, will not always be 'no'."

And the final entry in to-day's Log is taken from the 21st Chapter of The Revelation: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

FINANCIAL STATEMENT: A copy of the financial statement for the year ending 31st March, 1962, is included in this copy of the Sky Pilot News. The Honorary Auditor also writes:

"The income and expenditure account shows an excess of income over expenditure of £397/5/3, against £585/14/- for the previous year.

"Total income for the year was £7762/10/9, against the previous year of £6746/19/-, an improvement of £1015/11/9, but in relation to these expenses for the year were £7365/5/6, against the previous year of £6161/5/-, an increase of £1204/0/6.

"As in previous years, donations towards the cost of the buildings have not been shown in the Income and Expenditure Account, but appear in the Balance Sheet as a separate item."

The financial position, while giving no place for complacency, has improved steadily, and we have much cause to praise God for His evident blessing on this work. As the children grow older, there are greater expenses for dress, school items and their various needs; also, as our "family" grows larger there is added cost for each new child. We thank God that He has not been unmindful of our needs and has led

His people to give more liberally. In view of the steady progress, we can look forward to the future with confidence. It is with a sense of real gratitude to God and to our many supporters for their unselfish response to our needs, that we carry on the work of caring for these needy dark children.

STAFF: There have been several changes in the staff. Rita Fisher, who has been helping us for some months, at last found a vacancy in the Bible Training College in Brisbane, to which she made application a considerable while ago. She left here to take up her studies there, and we wish her God's richest blessing in the future. We feel sure that her training will be a means of deepening her spiritual life. She will be greatly missed, and we are grateful for her help during the months she has been with us. Her cheery nature and bright outlook have been very marked, and we feel sure that she will make a success of her life in the years to come.

Isabelle Thorne has helped us with the dark children for the past 10 years, but she was anxious to have a change from the constant routine of looking after the small children, and she asked us to try to secure another position for her for at least a time. Mr. Kennedy very kindly undertook to help her to secure a position in which she will be happy and contented, and he has gone to infinite trouble to help in this regard. It is not easy for a dark girl who has had such a sheltered life as Isabelle, and we would ask for your prayers for her future. Of course, this is still her home, and we will do all we can to watch over her as she goes out into the world and begins a new life.

Dora Mitchell, a dark girl from the Methodist Mission, has come to help us, and she is proving very capable and nice in the Home. We trust that she will be happy here, and that she may stay for a considerable time. We would also value your prayers for her, that while she is here she will not only be able to carry out the duties expected of her, but that she also may profit from the Christian fellowship at the Mission Farm.

Mrs. Warwick, the Secretary of the Mission, has to enter hospital on 16th July for a slight operation to the eyes. We ask specially for your prayers that she may recover quickly and completely. We thank God for the 12 years of devoted service that Mrs. Warwick has given to this work, and we trust she will be spared for many years to come.

THE SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP LIMITED
Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March, 1962

EXPENDITURE			INCOME		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Bank Charges		4 0	Bank Interest	7	14 9
Children's Expenses	190	7 11	Donations	3764	3 5
Car Allowance	211	0 0	Home Offering Boxes	360	5 6
Children's Board	2580	0 0	Deputations	80	4 10
Depreciation	415	5 3	General Donations	135	15 4
Electricity	77	0 5	Subs to News	40	11 2
Entertaining	15	10 0	Government Allowances	1203	11 1
Freight	3	0 4	Parents' Contributions	224	10 0
Insurance	42	1 4	Sales of Salvage	91	9 9
Maintenance and Repairs	51	10 2	Sale of Books	21	19 0
Printing and Stationery	308	1 2	Fetes, Stalls, etc.	1164	0 6
Postages	69	18 11	Store	668	5 5
Rates	22	0 0			
Rent	35	0 0			
Salaries and Wages	2556	1 10			
Store	595	11 6			
Sundry Expenses	4	0 4			
Telephone	40	11 9			
Travelling Expenses	8	18 11			
Utility Expenses	79	1 8			
Youth Fellowship	60	0 0			
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year transferred to Accumu- lated Funds	397	5 3			
	£7762	10 9		£7762	10 9

Balance Sheet as at 31st March, 1962

CURRENT LIABILITIES			CURRENT ASSETS		
Sundry Creditors	867	14 10	Commonwealth Trad- ing Bank	144	5 0
Loans	240	0 0	Cash on Hand	10	0 0
RESERVES			Stock (at cost)	331	17 0
Asset Revaluation				486	2 0
Reserve	2217	18 10	FIXED ASSETS		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			Children's Equipment	205	3 9
Balance 1/4/61	840	7 0	Furniture and Fittings	1900	9 8
Add excess of Income over Expenditure for the year ended 31/3/62	397	5 3	Office Equipment	544	15 3
	1237	12 3	Utility	857	3 5
BUILDING FUND			Buildings	3834	8 3
Balance			Machinery	47	12 0
1/4/61	3010	16 5	INTANGIBLE ASSETS		
Add Do- nations for the year ended 31/3/62	394	15 9	Formation Expenses	93	3 9
	3405	12 2			
	4643	4 5			
	£7968	18 1		£7968	18 1

For and on behalf of the Sky Pilot Fellowship Limited

K. Langford-Smith, Permanent Director
A. W. Kennedy, Councillor

We have examined the books, vouchers and records of The Sky Pilot Fellowship Limited for the year ended 31st March, 1962. We have obtained all the information and explanations we have required, and, in our opinion, the above Balance Sheet has been properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Company's affairs according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us, and as shown by the books of the Company. In our opinion, the Register of Members and other records which the Company is required to keep under the Companies Act, 1936, and by its Articles, have been properly kept.

K. H. PEARCE MOCATTA AND CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

(Signed) K. H. Pearce,

"Registered under the Public Accountants'
Registration Act, 1945, as amended."

Blacktown, 3/5/62.