

# SKY PILOT NEWS

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*Riverstone Lions Club begin additions to Packing Shed.*

## NOTHING TO GIVE: From the Sky Pilot's Log, 2CH Broadcast.

James, who visited Arnhem Land when I was there in 1930, was an Englishman, and came from an old family that had travelled with William the Conqueror—or, at least, that's what he told us. Strangely enough, there are so many men about whose ancestors came over with William that one wonders if he had a ship the size of the Queen Elizabeth. Anyhow, Palmer and I were respectfully silent, though George wasn't impressed.

"Did you say William the Conqueror?" he asked. "Yes, I thought that's what you said. Well, I've never heard of him. It must have been afore my time. He never landed in Darwin, as far as I know."

"Bah!" James snorted. "Ignorant stockman! You know, I detest this country, positively detest it. I haven't met a gentleman since I arrived, not one. And the natives! pooh! nothing but naked savages, lower than animals."

"Some animals ain't that low", George put in, "not when you compare them with some of the men that seem to get about these days. And as far as the Aborigines are concerned, I don't mind sayin' that I've learned a lot from them, and I've a lot of respect for a good Aboriginal."

"So you've learned what you know from the Aborigines, have you?" James said, sarcastically. "Well I'm not at all surprised; not in the least."

"Hold on a minute, James", Palmer interrupted, "you're talking through your hat. When I first came to this country I thought as you do now, and—well, I hate to admit it, but I despised the natives and thought it would be a good thing if they died out. I've learned a lot since then; and quite a lot of what I've learned is from the Aborigines."

"Nonsense! There's nothing worth learning from the Aborigines."

"You're wrong there", said George. "A man can learn a lot from the Aborigines, and what's more, there's many a white man in this country who owes his life to the natives. They're kind and generous, and they'd share anythin' they have with you, from a goanna to a favourite wife."

"How loathsome!" James exclaimed. "If anything, I prefer the goanna."

"That's about your level", George asserted. "Let me tell you . . ."

Palmer interrupted him. "Don't say it, George. I know what you are thinking, but don't say it; not on the Mission anyhow."

And there the matter rested for a time.

James fancied himself as a sailor and he told us stories of his favourite pastime—yachting. He

hinted at a private yacht he owned in England and we almost believed him. Anyhow he borrowed the Mission dinghy and took Palmer for a sailing trip. We were near the coast at the time, working on the salt pans, and all would have been well had James kept to the river. However, he decided to take the dinghy out to sea, and the result was they were caught in a sudden squall and driven far away from land. It is a wonder the dinghy lived in such a sea, but James did know quite a lot about boats, and he managed to keep it afloat, and finally beached it on Maria Island. He was rather proud of his feat, and let Palmer know all about it.

"Nasty squall, that", he said. "If I hadn't been an experienced yachtsman we would have been drowned. You are fortunate."

"Did you say fortunate?" Palmer wailed. "I like that! First, you nearly kill me with sea sickness, and then you land me on a desert island, where we'll starve to death or die of thirst, or both."

"We'll have to signal the first passing boat", James said, "and they'll take us off. There's no need to panic."

"The first passing boat? Did you say the first boat? Good heavens! Don't you know that we're in the Gulf of Carpentaria, right out of the track of boats? If Smithy doesn't come out looking for us, we might be here for years and years—if we don't starve first."

"We might rig up a sail. It is a pity the sail got torn to pieces in that squall. Or we could row to land."

"What would we make a sail of? Besides, we haven't any oars now, and if we tried to make them, how would we manage without even a pocket knife between us!"

"Good gracious! I had no idea the place was so isolated. We'd better find water. My lips are cracking in this heat."

"I'll say we had. Three days without water is the absolute limit in this country, and a lot of men go mad in less than three days. Come on, let's hike."

The men walked across the island. They found the remains of a billabong in the centre, but there was not a drop of water, and the bottom was caked and criss-crossed with gaping cracks. By nightfall they were in a bad way. They had walked till their clothes were torn to shreds in the thick scrub, their tongues were black and swollen and it was with difficulty they kept their cracked and blistering lips together.

They slept little that night and at daylight were again on their feet, staggering along in the vain search for water. They noticed, about 11 o'clock, some smoke in the trees and made towards it. Palmer alone reached the smoke, James dropped out by the way. It was a camp fire made by two Aborigines, who had come to the island for fishing and to catch turtles. The Aborigines gave Palmer water, propped him in the shade, and went back for James. They lifted him gently and carried him to the camp, where they bathed his face and wrists with water and gave him a little at a time to drink.

When the men fell into a sleep of utter exhaustion, the Aborigines watched over them and when they awoke fed them on oysters, fish and cooked lily roots. One of the Aborigines spoke English and Palmer tried to thank him.

"I say, you fellows", he said, "what I mean to say . . . well, you saved our lives and I'm terribly grateful. Of course, that's the wrong word. I mean—well, I'm extremely grateful, if you know what I mean."

"Poor fellow white man", said the Aboriginal, "him all a-same piccaninny longa bush. You two-fella close up finish that time."

"Yes, it was close up, all right", Palmer agreed. "Well, we appreciate what you have done. I'll be glad to pay you, of course—that is, I haven't anything on me at the moment—no cash, I mean—but if you're ever near my farm or the Mission, you can call in and I'll see you're properly rewarded."

"Me two-fella no more wantim money—nothin! Plenty water and tucker longa bush. Blackfella always share everythin'. You feel good now? By and by me take you longa mainland in canoe."

"Oh, we're fine now, thanks", said Palmer. "And to get to the mainland—well, that's just what we want. You're a Briton . . . what I mean is, you're a sport . . . a—a what's a word you'll understand? You properly good-fellow Aboriginal, no more little bit."

James said nothing.

Later on Palmer discussed the matter with James, after saying what he thought of yachtsmen in general and James in particular.

"That's the last time", he said with feeling, "that you'll ever kid me out to sea in a dinghy. We nearly perished. The only thing that saved us was finding those Aborigines. What was it you called them? Naked savages, lower than animals! You said we could learn nothing from them and they had nothing to give. Well, they gave us what

they had and it meant life to us. I wouldn't call that nothing."

"It meant nothing to them", James said crossly. "They had plenty and wouldn't miss a little water and food. Yes, they were useful, I suppose, in their right place. But so is a good dog, and—well, give me a dog any day."

And the final entry in today's Log is taken from the 25th chapter of Matthew: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in: naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me . . . Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

**RIVERSTONE LIONS CLUB:** We have been very short of space in the sorting and packing room where all the clothing and other articles sent in are attended to. Fortunately the Lions Club of Riverstone came to our aid and undertook to build an additional room on the present shed where this work is done. The illustration in this leaflet shows the first stage of their work: the concrete floor has been laid and the steel beams and roof have been completed. When finished the building will be a great comfort to us and will make the work of sorting the clothing so much easier. All Lions Clubs are "service" clubs and Riverstone members are living up to the wonderful reputation that has been built up by older established clubs.

**THE DARK CHILDREN:** Just before the end of 1971 two extra children were admitted, so we actually finished the year with 30 children in the Home. As usual, the children all went away for three weeks, staying in the homes of various friends. They had a wonderful time and came back fit and well. They must have behaved reasonably well as we had no complaints from their hostesses. Unfortunately we did not have quite enough children to accept all the invitations for the holidays and some people, who asked for a child, were disappointed. We usually book the children for the various homes about September and applications for a child should be in by then for the children are allotted, other things being equal, to those whose applications are first received.

After the holidays several of the children went back to parents, now in a better position to care for them, but their places were quickly taken by other needy Aboriginal children and we soon had our full complement again.

**DEPUTATION MEETINGS:** Throughout the year a number of Deputation Meetings were taken by Mr. Keith Langford-Smith. Of recent years we have kept a book recording the Deputation Meetings and on referring to it we find that Mr. Langford-Smith has taken almost a thousand such meetings and has spoken to over 731,000 people. Naturally many of these have heard him several times so it is not claimed that this number heard him for the first time; but it gives some indication of the value of Deputation Meetings.

Mr. Bruce Langford-Smith also spoke to several gatherings and following one such meeting \$500 was offered to help forward the work. It should be noted that appeals for money are never made in Deputation Meetings; instead the simple story of the work and God's provision is stressed. This is God's work and we trust Him to provide for our every need.

**SPIRITUAL WORK:** In this Home Aboriginal children are fed, clothed, housed and given every material help that is possible. Many of them suffering from malnutrition have picked up remarkably. They also have medical and dental care and our doctors and dentists have been wonderfully good to us over the years. But we never lose sight of the fact that this is, first of all, a spiritual work. It is an Evangelical work, that is, it is run according to the teaching of the New Testament to the best of our ability. We accept the whole Bible as the Word of God and the final authority for all our conduct. Prayer is the basis of our organisation and without this we could not continue. In answer to prayer offered at this Mission we have seen lives changed, seemingly incurable cases of illness healed, material needs supplied and other evidences of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Sanctified common sense has a part to play but we look to God for His leading in every step that we take; and, as is rightly due, we give God the praise, the honour and the glory for every success that we have.

**ONSLOW HOUSE:** Some of our more recent supporters have asked us why we named the children's accommodation "Onslow House". Actually it was in memory of Mr. George

Onslow, one of our earliest supporters, that the House was named. Mr. George Onslow was a real child of God and his life and walk with the Lord were an inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing him. But his outstanding character was not able to overshadow the influence of his wife, Mrs. Vera Onslow. Quite a track was worn to their humble abode by people in trouble visiting them for comfort and prayer.

Mrs. Onslow is a Council Member of the Mission and the Secretary of our Parramatta Women's Auxiliary. She also, for many years, has undertaken all the sorting, pricing and preparation of clothing for Street Stalls and Sales of Work. This involves days of work each month and Mrs. Onslow often stays at the Mission Farm for days on end. When here in the evening she always takes the dark children for prayers; she is a gifted and interesting speaker and the children are thrilled when she takes prayers.

Mention should also be made of her sister, Mrs. Cannon, and the members and friends of the Cannon family, who stock and maintain the Parkfield Stall at our Sales. Over the years the Onslow and Cannon families have brought thousands of dollars to this work; but even such an achievement is nothing to be compared to the spiritual impact they have had on the children and staff at Marella. We can truthfully echo Paul's words in Philippians Chapter 1: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."

**WOMEN'S AUXILIARY:** Over the years outstanding work has been done by the members of the Women's Auxiliary. Some of the members of the Parramatta Branch have been actively engaged in this work for a great many years and they have seen this work grow and prosper under the hand of God. It is not possible to mention names, for it would be so easy to overlook some quiet and faithful worker. But the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer—to say nothing of the other office bearers—have done outstanding work. Then there are those who carry on faithfully year after year—they all make up the body of our Auxiliary.

The Blue Mountains Branch, though it has not been in operation quite so long, has, over the years, made it possible for us to build an Office Block and furnish the Office with all the equipment needed. This has meant much to us and we will always be grateful for their outstanding work.