



Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties
—Margaret Bondfield

INTERVIEW

HUNTING WITH THE "PACK"

EVERY day we live and learn something new—and sometimes we find how abysmally ignorant we are.

For example, I only discovered to-day that Wolf Cubs were boys—and not girls—and that the Scout movement actually had some women leaders. My informant was Miss Nancy Wilson herself, Dominion Commissioner for the Wolf Cubs.

Miss Wilson was very lenient with my ignorance. She was nice enough not even to show surprise. But, then, she is an extremely nice person, as those who are privileged to know her will testify. A tall, stately woman, with silver hair and very gentle blue-grey eyes. But when one looked closer one saw the force and strength behind that air of quiet and tranquillity. A woman who gets things done—and in the most practical and unobtrusive manner. That is Miss Nancy Wilson.

What Thirty Boys Wanted

Bulls is her birthplace and her home. All her life she has been interested in Sunday School teaching, and just twenty-four years ago, while engaged in this work, some thirty small boys came along and appealed for her help. They wanted to become Wolf Cubs.

Now the Scout movement was not developed then to the extent it is to-day, but Miss Wilson hated to disappoint her boys—and she really felt that something should be done about it.

With this decision she laid the foundation of her life work—and of her present post as Dominion Commissioner. She decided to become the Cub leader herself.

This, as you can imagine, was not an easy decision, but once started on it she never thought of looking back.

Choosing Her Uniform

She told me, with a smile, how she had to worry out the problem of what dress or uniform she should wear in her self-appointed post. She compromised with a khaki jacket and skirt and a regulation hat. The next thing to do was to study Scout craft, and this she did with unremitting zeal. From a little Scout leader at Rotorua she learnt signalling—and so on through all the necessary study—till her eager "pack" were well set on the road to becoming regular Scouts. And Miss Wilson progressed with them. Her work became

known. Her big moment arrived, however, when, in 1923, she went overseas to continue her training at Gilwell Park, the Scout Headquarters in England.

"It is the loveliest old Elizabethan house," she said, "situated in the Epping Forest, and surrounded by acres of green land. I loved every minute of my stay there, and of course I added tremendously to my knowledge of Scout work."

It was when she returned to New Zealand after this visit that Miss Wilson

I asked the eternal feminine question. "How about romance? Do your Cub leaders ever fall in love with one another—it could happen?"

The woman, not the Cub Leader, understood my question.

"It does," she laughed, "quite often—and very successful the marriages prove. Most of them keep on with their Scout work. It is an interest they share. I'm always deeply interested in following their futures."

Meetings with Baden-Powell

Miss Wilson has made several trips to England, the last occasion two years back to attend the International Scout Conference at Gilwell Park.

"It was a memorable occasion," she said. "We had representatives from all over the world except Germany and Italy."

"You met Lord Baden-Powell, of course?"

"I was privileged to stay with him twice," she answered. "He is a most charming person, so simple, so completely unaffected. He is also very gifted at sketching. On my last visit to his home," she went on, "he showed me a letter he had received that day from Buckingham Palace and just signed—Elizabeth. He had written to the little Princess, herself an enthusiastic Girl Guide, enclosing two sketches, one of an agile little Brownie skipping along, the other of a bearded old man. He pointed out that he was not like the first but like the second. The Princess's reply was charmingly worded, and Lord Baden-Powell obviously appreciated her courtesy and thought."

Roses, And Birds

Miss Wilson still finds time to keep up her Sunday School work, and at the present time she has a new activity as Chairman of the Social Committee for the new aerodrome erected at Bulls. They arrange monthly dances for the officers and men, card parties, trips—and are ready to supply at short notice supper for a hundred or fifty girl partners for a dance.

"And at home, Miss Wilson, what do you do?"

"I have a very lovely rose garden," she said. "Then I have my birds—tame tuis and bellbirds who come each day to be fed. Last winter we had a regular congregation of them."

Scouts, roses, and birds? What strange, yet fascinating pursuits has every individual—and each sufficient unto himself. Curious, yet wonderful world.



MISS NANCY WILSON, Dominion Commissioner for the Wolf Cubs

was given the coveted post of Akela Leader. To-day, in addition to her post as Dominion Commissioner, she directs the training of Scout leaders throughout the Dominion.

Training The Leaders

"You know," she said, "although there is a lot of work attached to this, it has a very human and most enjoyable side. At regular intervals we have special training camps for the Leaders. Our last one was held at Lowry Bay." She showed me some snaps of her camp and the "pupils" at work and play. They looked such a cheery lot of young men and women, workmanlike in their trim uniforms—busy cooking over their camp fires, or seated together in laughing groups.

These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E., Home Science Tutorial Section, University of Otago:

"Profitable Handicrafts and Pastimes for Winter Evenings." Monday, August 12, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Hospitality and Thrift." Wednesday, August 14, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Why Not Eat Your Own Vegetables?" Thursday, August 15, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, August 16, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Caring for Clothing and Shoes." Friday, August 16, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

From The ZB Stations

"The Melody Story-teller," at ZB stations at 7.30 p.m. on Thursdays, and at 8 p.m. on Saturdays.

"The Lost Empire," from 1ZB, at 9.5 p.m. on Sundays.

"Artists A to Z," from 2ZB, at 4.15 p.m., Tuesday, August 13.

"Poets of the Sunny Isles" (Clyde Carr), from 3ZB, on Monday, August 12, at 3.15 p.m.

"The Guest Announcer," from 4ZB, on Thursday, August 15, at 8 p.m.

Talk by a Representative of the Wellington Red Cross Society. Tuesday, August 13, 2YA 11.30 a.m.

"Fashions": Ethel Early. Tuesday, August 13, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Spring and Summer Fashions" (2): "Lorraine." Thursday, August 15, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

Talk under the auspices of the Christchurch Branch of the National Council of Women. Thursday, August 15, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Outdoors in Australia: Plant Life in Australia": Alatheia Solomons, B.Sc. Thursday, August 15, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook": Sara McKee. Friday, August 16, 3YA 11.15 a.m.