

The Place for a Village

Mick Hull

THE three contestants in the race to be the first ski village in Victoria are already on the starting line, though it can hardly be said the race has yet started. The first stage, the growth of accommodation facilities, the preliminary warming up as it were, is already going strong.

Buller has the SCV's hut of long standing and recent improvement, and also the Ivor Whittaker Memorial Lodge, being built as this is written. CSIR Ski Club built a novel cabin at the Skating Rink in the autumn of 1946. Junior Ski Club of Australia's plans for rebuilding near the Chalet site have not yet come to fruition.

Estimates of the number of other applicants for hut-sites range up to twenty. Most, if not all, of these applications come from various ski-ing clubs, but there are other bodies also. The applications are being considered by the Forests Commission, charged with public administration of the area. Water supply will be a problem which many may have to settle by the use of tanks. Road access is already solved, due to the splendid work of the CRB (as far as the Chalet site), and the SCV (from there to the Cow Camp area). The SCV deserves special praise for this last extension, which will do much to solve the transport problems of club-building. It should also go on record that the JSCA had a hand in the road to the Chalet site, in that their efforts helped to bring about construction of that road.

Buller's attraction is its ease of access for the week-ender. John Eddy, writing in "Schuss," says of King's Birthday there in 1946, that there were between 200 and 400 visitors, according to various estimates. Eddy's enthusiasm has had no little part in recent improvements effected by the SCV to its Summit Hut. Present accommodation totals 66, comprised of:—

Whittaker Memorial Lodge	30
SCV Summit Hut	12
CSR Ski Lodge	20
Cow Camp	4

Even if all the twenty applicants for hut-sites are granted their sites, and their cabins

are built, they would barely house the lower estimate of the visitors during the first post-war King's Birthday. Chalet accommodation on a large scale will be an essential step to the beginning of a village. Bona-fide club building should be encouraged to the limit, though with qualifications as to the suitability of the structures.

To sum up Buller's prospects in the "Village race," the plans for accommodation are hopeful, but need further expansion, road access is very good and only minor improvements are essential, the problem of water supply may need special treatment, and the ski facilities are inadequate. There is need for at least one good jump, preferably two consisting of a medium hill and a hill of championship standard. Ski tows are needed, but the geography makes it difficult to choose the site of the first.—John Eddy is confident that Buller can be our first Alpine village, and says that there is room for five thousand to ski on the mountain without congestion.

Hotham is Buller's chief rival of the moment. There is no doubt that it has better ski-ing slopes for downhill runners, and it has been for nearly twenty years the base for extended ski tours to the Plains and to Bogong. Some say it has slightly better weather than Buller, but this is arguable. If it lags behind Buller it will be because it is less easy of access. The road distance from Melbourne is over 200 miles via Harrierville and 300 via Omeo, compared to Buller's 150 miles. At Buller the trip from car to hut is easy, except to the SCV summit hut in bad weather. Hotham skiers have to spend the best part of another day in getting to their snow accommodation after leaving their transport. On the solution of the access problem depends the further growth of Hotham.

Present accommodation at Hotham is 52, and with that for which building plans have already been made the total is 139, as follows:—

Railway Chalet now 28, to be made 80 soon.
Alpine Club's Lodge 16.
Diamantina Hut 8.
Lawler's Hut (not for use).
University SC Lodge, to be built, 25.

Edelweiss Clubhouse, to be built, 10.

In addition, the SCV plans to follow its Memorial Clubhouse on the Plains with another important cabin in the vicinity of Hotham, for which it has already been granted a site—(the Plains Clubhouse will hold approximately 40 when built). There are also rumors of other prospective applicants for building sites in the Hotham area.

Hotham's only jump was burned, but as Bill Harris, new Chalet Manager this year for the Railways, is keen on the development of jumping, one may be built shortly. No ski tows exist, but one can be confident that it will come with the expansion of accommodation on the mountain. The valley of Swindler's Creek at Hotham, with its many surrounding spurs and gullies of fine ski-ing slopes, offers an ideal site for a tow. Wherever placed, it would serve dozens of slopes on both sides of this semi-circular valley.

Snowploughing of ten to fifteen miles of road will be necessary before access to Hotham can be brought parallel to Buller's. The Harrierville approach is best from the transport point of view, but the snowed road is narrow with many cuttings into the solid rock and in winter parts are exposed to the blizzard's full force. The Omeo approach, though longer from Melbourne, appears to be a far easier problem for snow-ploughing, as there are only two cuttings at the very last stretch, the rest being gently undulating country. The problems of clearing the Omeo approach are discussed in an article by Mr. Cliff Bant in this issue. There is the additional disadvantage for the Omeo approach that it is farther to the rail-head, 101 miles to Bruthen from Hotham, compared with the Hotham-Bright distance of 36 miles. The road distances from Melbourne to Bright and Bruthen are identical.

A choice between these two will have to be made soon, probably before the extensions to the Railways Chalet are completed, as use of the Bon Accord approach will then become increasingly a traffic problem rather than a problem of technique for the individual. Improvements will be essential either to the Harrierville or the Omeo approach.

Bogong High Plains.

The ski village which may grow on the Bogong High Plains is likely to be less compact than those at Buller and Hotham. The ski-ing terrain is more extensive horizontally

but less so vertically than the other two, and so more conducive to touring. Racing slopes are less plentiful, though advocates of the Plains will say that good courses exist. So far no courses of the calibre of the Varsity Drag or Mary's Slide at Hotham, and Fanny's Finish or Shakey Knees at Buller, have been brought to light and tested by the holding of a championship meeting, because of lack of accommodation if for no other reason. The splendid racing slopes of Mt. Bogong are a day's trip away—too far even for the most hardened of "Western Facers" from across the border.

Road access to the Plains is excellent, 230 miles to the snowline from Melbourne. Buller is closer for week-ends, but the Plains skier is closer to accommodation than, at present, his Hotham colleague is, reckoned in hours travelling time from Melbourne. Snow-ploughing would probably be necessary in heavy winters to avoid a long slog on ski. S.E.C. permission has to be obtained before the last thirty miles can be traversed. These remarks apply to the S.E.C. road through Bogong township, and not to the high-level approaches from Omeo and Hotham.

The various huts scattered about the Plains at present provide accommodation for about 67 skiers, and building plans may extend this to at least 150 within several weeks:—

Rover Scouts Hostel (Mt. Cope)	30
Wallace's Hut (Mt. Cope)	5
Cope Hut (Mt. Cope)	8
S.E.C. Cottage (Mt. Cope)—not for use.	
Fitzgerald's Hut (Marm's Point)	5
Kelly's Hut (Marm's Point)	6
Tawonga Hut (Mt. Nelse)	5
Mt. McKay Chalet (Kent Hughes)	30?
Bogong Ski Club Cabin (Rocky Valley)	10?
S.C.V. War Memorial Clubhouse— (to be built)	40

There is one Jumping Hill on the Plains, near the S.E.C. cottage, but so far there is not a ski tow. If the power to be generated near-by from the Kiewa hydro-electric scheme can be tapped, the provision of a ski tow may present less of a problem there than at Buller or Hotham.

Whichever centre wins the race to become Victoria's first ski village, the growth now taking place will relieve a little the pressing problem of accommodation which has hindered development of the sport for so long. Without numbers ski-ing cannot afford

the facilities which will enable it to expand rapidly. The serious lack of space, accentuated by the Chalets burned in the 1939 bushfires, has prevented many from taking a full ski-ing holiday themselves, let alone introducing their friends to the sport at the same time.

Present estimates place Victoria's ski-ing

population at between 3000 and 5000, as against accommodation totalling only about 200 beds, including a fair proportion of primitive huts. 1950 should see this accommodation expanded to at least 600, but this will be little enough at the present rate at which recruits are joining up.

How Mt. Buller Was Developed — The J.S.C.A.'s Part

Allan Doggett

The Junior Ski Club of Australia and its members can claim the lion's share in the amazing development of Mt. Buller that occurred in the decade before the war, to push it to the front as Australia's premier week-end ski resort.

After five years' absence from the snow, when 86 per cent. of its male members were on active service, as well as many of its young women members, the Club has again emerged as an active body. All club activities were suspended in 1941 for the duration—now we can look back on a war record in which the spirit of service has been magnificently exemplified. We were indeed fortunate that only two members lost their lives in action.

The history of this comparatively old club is virtually the history of Mt. Buller, where the Club established its home on formation in 1934. The building of the original Chalet, in 1929, by a small syndicate intent on a home in the snow, was Buller's real beginning as a ski-ing resort. From this syndicate came a number of foundation members of the Club. The final stage was the building of the New Chalet accommodating more than 80, controlled by Alpine Developments Ltd., in which the J.S.C.A. and its members held over 50 per cent. of the shares. This gave the Club a position of power and influence in ski-ing unsurpassed by any other ski club in Australia or New Zealand. The story between is one of sheer hard slogging work by the Club and its members.

A now eminent Melbourne solicitor was taking his annual snow holiday at Mt. Hotham in 1927. In those days most Australian skiers had only seen ski pointed

downhill, without any sort of control. He was amazed to see there a young Austrian who skied with an ease and grace not previously seen in Australia.

Ski fever was just as contagious in those days, and Tom Trumble soon formed his syndicate—names flash to mind—Doctors Lawrence Stokes and Bunny (E. A.) Cato, the names of Manifold and Black. The British Trade Commissioner of the time, W. Bankes Amrey, who spent his leisure fishing and ski-ing, induced the syndicate to try Mt. Buller. So, with Adrian Court as Hon. Secretary, they built their lodge there. Who better to look after it than the young Austrian from Mt. Hotham? Helmut Kofler was installed as their host.

Costs mounted—the plaything became expensive—Kofler was given the right to take in guests to augment his salary—the job of bookings manager was wished on Court, one he carried out unobtrusively and efficiently until 1935, and then again till 1942 as the pillar of Alpine Development Ltd.

But not so fast! The building of this Chalet was no small task, fifteen miles into the bush from Merrijig, and five thousand feet up the mountain—no roads—no tracks. Mr. Amery had told his story well and the syndicate were determined to proceed. Materials had to be transported there—a track was made through the bush, and pack-horses obtained—three slippery, awkward crossings of the Delatite River—then a stiff climb of three thousand feet to the site. Pack-horses, at 25/- a trip, often arrived with a load consisting of one hurricane lamp—broken at that. Kofler was not exactly pleased. The bath, intended for the women's



Shaky Knees, Mt. Buller

bathroom, which slipped off the horse and rolled to the foot of the gorge, still lies at the bottom for the taking—if you can find it (we couldn't!).

The piano was a minor miracle—you remember the one that used to be skidded up and down the passage on party nights? The first Mrs. Kofler wanted one, to help avoid the loneliness of their isolated home. After a long search, probably the only one of its kind that would fit a packhorse was located. It was to be auctioned, and Mrs. Kofler was so eager to secure it that, in her excitement, she outbid her husband, adding considerably to the cost. How it arrived at the Chalet intact is still a mystery, as all building materials, even the water-pipe, had to be cut to 6 ft. lengths for the horses. Perhaps Mrs. Kofler holds the secret? I once watched her tuning it with loving care—armed with a pair of pliers and a nailfile!

The original Chalet cost £3000, mostly in transport of materials. It would have cost another £1000 if erected 800 ft. further up the mountain.

My first visit to it was in 1930, and to one born almost with a steering-wheel in the hand, and never a rein over a frisky pony's head, it was a hazardous journey. Bouncing over fallen trees in the valley, slipping and

sliding on the narrow sidling track up to the Chalet. A smack on the rump, and the horse fled back to Merrijig. As for the return—when a horse smells home, be it over narrow mountain tracks hanging above tree-choked gorges, or over fallen trees in the valley, he fairly flies the lot. Yes!! Several whiskies at Merrijig, taken standing up.

The J.S.C.A. was formed in 1934 with Tom Mitchell as its first President. The Club occupied the whole Chalet for two weeks in August, 1935, commencing its activities and developing improved ski-ing facilities for the mountain. The Club erected the snowpole line from the treeline above Cow Camp to the summit, equipping each pole with a numbered disc, and arrow pointing to the next pole. Signposts followed, pointing the way to Mt. Stirling, Kofler's Hut, etc. Another step was the presentation of a comprehensive medical chest to the Chalet, available to all who visited the mountain. (Ruth Good and I were probably the first users.—Vic. Ed.)

The J.S.C.A. instigated the clearing of timber on ski slopes now know as "One Tree Hill," "The Cat's Whisker," and "Slalom Gully," as well as the now famous championship downhill course, "Shaky Knees." The erection of Cow Camp Hut and the clearing of a track to it also was due to the Club's efforts.

The whole of the mountain was mapped, heights, gradients and lengths measured for the "Fanny's Finish" and "Shaky Knees" courses, and telephone wiring installed on the mountain. Racing equipment was made available for the Interstate race meetings, and the President and members gave flags for the marking of courses and slalom-setting. Finally, the road was extended right to the Chalet as a result of J.S.C.A. activities in official circles.

The Club's record in racing and tests prior to the war is an interesting achievement: its members provided:—

Three members of the Australian International Ski Team.

Five members of Victorian Interstate Teams.

Captain of Australian Team.

Captain of Victorian Team.

Members have a distinguished record in State, National and International ski races, at home and abroad. Before the war the following tests had been passed:

A.N.S.F. Gold Medal, 1; A.N.S.F. Silver Medal, 4; A.N.S.F. Third Class, 24; Club Brown J Test, 30.

(I enquired, hopefully, whether the Brown J test was a "Brown Jug" test, but it means "Brown Junior," alas.—Vic. Ed.).

One member has been awarded the British and New Zealand Gold Medals, unique among Australian skiers.

The Junior Ski Club is about to enter upon its new era, continuing its original aims of good fellowship on the snow, and the general advancement of ski-ing by use of its funds and the efforts of its members. At the moment of writing the Club is making plans to rebuild at Buller, despite the difficulties surrounding that task. But if one is to judge by its past record of service to ski-ing and achievements in ski-ing development, those difficulties will be quickly overcome.



The late Helmut Kofler

Ski-ing at Mt. Buffalo

K. B. Burnside

MOUNT Buffalo rises abruptly from the surrounding country, with its sides vertical in places, and everywhere very steep. The top of the mountain, however, forms a rough plateau, from four to five thousand feet above the sea and many thousands of acres in extent. There are ridges and peaks rising a few hundred feet above the general plateau level, but nowhere is it possible to get a long downhill run such as Buller, Hotham and Kosciusko afford. Furthermore, the surface of the plateau and its ridges is strewn with huge, rounded, granite boulders, deposited there by some long-forgotten volcanic upheaval, and weathered by storms of ages. It would take twenty feet of snow to cover the boulders on many otherwise excellent ski-ing slopes, but far from twenty, Buffalo is lucky if it gets two feet. As a result, for all its large area of snow country, Buffalo has very few ski runs, and the best of these are some miles from the Chalet. The newcomer to Buffalo naturally feels that he will try the nearer runs first.

A couple of hundred yards from the Chalet is the Pig Run, which is a very short, gentle, easy, beginner's slope. On the Pig Run one may meet much of the Chalet's youth and

beauty, thereby adding the joys of social intercourse to those of the snow, and one may also laugh at its middle-age and adipose. Further, one may even, if one is old, and stiff with war, try the Pig Run a few times oneself, welcoming this opportunity to feel the skis again before setting out in search of more arduous slopes. By the end of the first day, however, even the moderately keen skier feels that it is time to pass on to bigger things, and see what else the mountain has to offer. In the lounge after dinner someone recommends him to try the Lake Slide.

By the shores of Lake Catani, about a mile and a half from the Chalet down a gentle track, there is a hut. And, running a hundred yards or so up a gentle hill behind it is an open space cut through the scrub, and covered with snow packed hard by many skis. A group of enthusiastic school-girls herringbone rapidly up the edges of the slope to the boulders that form its upper limit, and one by one come squealing down. The first three take it straight, but the last, who is more advanced, takes the opportunity of practising her linked stems, which so far, unfortunately, she can do much better to the left than to the right. Presently a group of young ex-servicemen arrive; it is their first

year on the snow, and they are loving every minute of it. Then a middle-aged couple appear, who look apprehensively at the slope and say that if they'd known it was as steep as that they wouldn't have come. After a try from half-way up, when they are almost knocked down by one of the young ex-servicemen, they decide that the Lake Slide is no place for them, and make their way back to the Chalet.

Lunch is the usual jolly affair of a hut filled with smoke, people, and burnt chops, and is cooked and dispensed by a wealthy stockbroker and his twelve-year-old son, who are regular visitors to the Lake Slide. The father is not an enthusiastic skier, and comes out to be with his son. He likes to retire to the hut at about half past eleven, and light the fire and boil the billy so that everything is ready for lunch when the crowd come in at one.

As our skier plods back up the icy track to the Chalet in the evening he reflects that after all he has had a good day. He needed a nice little practice slope like that to loosen him up, and now he is absolutely ready to tackle the real ski-ing. To-morrow he will go to Dingo Dell, which appears to be the piece de resistance of the nearer ski-ing grounds.

The day dawns grey, but windless, and a steady fall of flakes has already added several added inches to the snow. It is cold and dry outside, and conditions should be perfect. Dingo Dell is about three and a half miles away, so an early start is in order. The first part of the way is the same as yesterday—to Lake Catani—after which the track winds along the opposite shore from the Lake Slide, then turns up into attractive wooded hills. The pleasant scenery of the undulating country make the next couple of miles a sheer delight. Finally, after crossing a creek, the track leads up to a ridge, from which it runs gently down to the hut, which stands in a clearing that leads up to the ski run. The run itself has a slope of about ten or fifteen degrees, and drops perhaps a hundred and fifty feet. This is big stuff, and most of the people on it are en-

thusiastic, experienced skiers, who have had several previous seasons at Buffalo. It is not crowded here, since the cleared slope is a hundreds yards or so wide, and the snow to-day is perfect. A good time, therefore, is had by all.

On the following day, however, conditions have deteriorated, and our skier feels that he must explore yet further afield. After having lunch at Dingo then, he proceeds further along the road towards the Horn.

The main ski runs on Buffalo are the Cathedral and the Cresta, and a trip to them in the absence of the tractor comes almost into the category of ski touring. They lie six and seven miles from the Chalet respectively, on the road running past Dingo Dell to the Horn. The Cathedral is on the lower slopes of a ridge that would be very exciting if the boulders allowed one to ski from the top of it, and as it is the average skier can get quite enough speed on it to give him a thrill. It is steep enough to give him good practice at his turns, but it is not very long. On the Cresta there is a ski-lift, which has not been working for some years, but will probably be repaired by next winter. The run itself is about as long as from the top of Horse Hill to the bottom of Slalom Gully at Buller, but is probably not as steep as the lower part of Slalom Gully. There are really two runs at Cresta, one on either side of the ski-lift, and the main difference between them is that one faces the afternoon sun more than the other. Most of the regular Buffalo skiers seem to regard the Cresta as difficult and rather dangerous—something requiring care and control, to be tackled by the experts and left alone by the majority.

This attitude towards bigger things was typified by an ex-Air-Force University student who had had three previous seasons at Buffalo, when asked why he didn't try Hotham or Buller he replied that he felt he was not good enough yet. The fear of speed engendered by a too-cautious training on too-easy slopes retards the development of many a potentially good skier.



C.S.I.R. Ski Lodge on Mt. Buller

Bruce Foster

IF you want to own a 20-man ski hut in the mountains for £3/3/-, you can't buy one off the shelf, but the staff of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research managed to build their lodge at Mt. Buller, in Victoria, for about that cost per member. Like many other short statements, there is a certain amount of exaggeration in that one but it is substantially true, and this is how it was done.

After two or three parties of C.S.I.R. staff had been away for hut holidays together, and after others who had survived the chancy business of ballots for Hotham had paid out large sums for short holidays, talk over the lunch tables indicated that quite a lot of people would be interested in forming a C.S.I.R. Ski Club and in building a lodge for themselves. The movement started in

earnest in the last quarter of 1945 when a decision to build on Mt. Buller was made. A survey party travelling by means of an ancient and very dishonourable car—it smelt strongly of kerosene and sump oil and caused its occupants to carry out unheard of running repairs—looked over the mountains and reported two possible sites, one near One Tree Slope and the other higher up near Cow Camp. Various considerations caused the selection of the One Tree Slope site and a second survey party finalised the actual pegging out in relation to a small, but very good spring, and in conformity with the requirements laid down by the Forests Commission which controls the area. The first working party of thirteen cleared and excavated the site on Australia Day week-end in January, 1946, and the second put in the

stumps, laid the bearers and framed and raised the walls on Eight Hours' week-end in March. As the eight hours spirit was not much in evidence, and despite a snowfall on the Sunday night, progress on this week-end was really spectacular. Those who were there will not quickly forget that Monday morning breakfast, eaten standing up in the snow, and the subsequent sawing and nailing of snow-covered timber.

The hut is of orthodox timber construction sheathed with 6in. x $\frac{1}{2}$ in. weatherboards underneath which is "Sisalkraft" paper to prevent draughts. It was originally intended to make the lodge of "scientific" construction but the exigencies of supply forced it to be merely "industrial." The original design was for prefabricated double-skinned panels of asbestos-cement sheet glued on to a rectangular grid of wood, but when it became impossible to obtain the asbestos-cement, a retreat was made to weatherboards.

The objective set for the 1946 autumn was to construct the shell of the building and instal bunks and heating and cooking stoves. This was accomplished with only five working parties and the lodge was in use for skiing by June. Though the pipe had been landed at the site, there was no time to lay on the water from the spring some 500 feet away and 45 feet higher than the lodge, and water was carried until the deep snow made this a job only for supermen.

A considerable amount of thought has gone into the design of the lodge and a considerable amount of manual effort into its construction (ask those who carried up on their backs the parts of the third stove, after the winter snow had come). But a minimum of money has been spent for the highly satisfying result achieved. It was decided that the club be limited to 60 Foundation Members who would pay £3/3/- for their life membership, together with some Associate Members who would pay 10/- per annum for membership. About £200 was obtained in this way, sufficient to pay for the materials and transport used in 1946. The total value of the lodge and contents may be judged from the fact that it is insured for £550 for an annual premium of £5. The only other annual charge is 5/- to the Forests Commission for permissive occupancy of the site. The Commission stipulated that the lodge be not on any of the cleared ski runs and that it be surrounded, for fire reasons, with

a clearing of one chain in all directions; also that it be not used during the bush fire season.

Transport, except for a very few fortunate people who were able occasionally to use private cars, was by a hired 28-seater bus and this cost about 30/- per person. So far, particularly because of the heavy snow well down the mountain, it has proved necessary to sleep each Friday night at a Mansfield hotel and leave again at 6 a.m. Saturday. In normal snow years, and with the improved path for access which the club has in mind to cut, it may be possible to reach the lodge on Friday night by soon after midnight. The return to Melbourne starts at about 2 p.m. on the last day of the week-end, the bus leaves about 4 p.m. and arrives in Melbourne about 10 p.m. Surplus seats in the bus have always been made available to other skiers.

Hut fees charged during the first season were 2/6 for a week-end and 7/6 for a week. These were payable by both Foundation and Associate Members. The former have an advantage over the others in that they may utilise a "priority" for four week-ends each winter. Each member may take with him one visitor, provided he uses one of his "priorities" for the purpose. Wives or husbands may become members or may, of course, come as visitors. Also, it has been decided that Foundation Members of the Club who leave C.S.I.R. may retain their membership.

On the financial system as given above, the autumn of 1947 about £75 will be spent on materials; all labour will be for love. The additional £50 needed will be obtained by loans from Foundation Members, repayable before the end of 1947. The money to the club ended its first winter with £25 credit. To carry out additions and improvements in repay will be obtained from hut fees and these will be raised by about 50 per cent. Even then they will still be very moderate. As the money which members lend to pay for improvements will be returned to them without diminution, this system seems to produce costless improvements!

On the matter of detail of design, the floor area is 16 x 36 feet and accommodation is limited to 20. There is also a porch for ski and wood storage. About two-thirds of the floor area is given over to cooking, heating, eating and living purposes and the rest to

twelve individual bunks arranged two-storey fashion. The other eight people sleep on mattresses on the floor of the loft. About one-third of the building has a ceiling, this acting as the loft floor. The bunks consist of canvas stretched between two pipes as side members and carry cocconut fibre mattresses.

A one-fire wood stove has been provided for cooking, together with two heating stoves, wood-fired. These are grouped together in the centre of the floor and have a common flue. The air round this acts as a very effective "drying room." The heating arrangements together with draft exclusion, are excellent and no one has ever complained of cold. But though both heating stoves provide a certain small amount of cooking space on top, it must be admitted that insufficient cooking facilities have been provided. Food and cooking arrangements are left to members to organise themselves. Usually parties of from three to six form and buy and cook their own food together. Rosters are arranged for work on firewood, water, dish-washing and hut cleaning.

The structural design of the hut is not wholly "unscientific" as the Division of Forest Products seized the opportunity to make the lodge a high altitude low temperature research station by installing several experimental panels in the walls. Weathering proceeds at an accelerated rate under the conditions of low temperatures at night combined with the fairly high temperatures of sunny days and the high winds and snow of bad weather. Panels of asbestos-cement sheet using different adhesives and wood-wool board are under observation; also different paints are being tested.

A pitch of 45 deg. was adopted for the roof

and this was found to give a surprising amount of usable space above the ceiling; hence the decision to put some of the sleepers up in the loft. The roof was, perforce, made of 1 in. boards covered with bituminous roofing sheet well battened down, as it was not possible to obtain corrugated iron.

One corner of the hut is about four feet above the ground. This provides a useful place for firewood storage, and a trapdoor in the floor allows access to this storage without going outside.

The design of the lodge as built has proved very successful, but the first season has pointed the way to several improvements which will be incorporated. The volume in the loft has proved to be just large enough to accommodate all twenty bunks and the downstairs floor will be freed of sleeping impedimenta. A drying room will be installed, and the porch will be lengthened to add a washroom, and a food preparation area will be marked out. A second cooking stove will be installed and the fires from both stoves will help to heat the drying room. The water has already been piped to the hut and possibly a hot shower system will be provided. Except for "Masonite" panels up three feet, the lodge is unlined, and it is intended to do this when material is available. Similarly, the roof will be covered with iron, but this may wait several years.

Another immediate improvement will be the building of lockers so that members may leave some of their gear and food there. Provisioning of the lodge in summer with some of the ordinary non-perishable foods will be done and this should do much to reduce the arduous back-breaking task of carrying up on each trip the food required.