

# Victorian Chalets and Shelters

By C. J. M. Cole

[Unfortunately lack of space allows only portion of this article to be printed in this edition. It will be completed in the 1937 edition. Its value will be apparent to all skiers. Some of the huts shown in the illustrations are among those which will appear in the completed article next year.—Editor.]

The following is an attempt at recording particulars of chalets and shelters erected in, or adjacent to, alpine areas and useful to skiers. It is hoped that it will prove convenient for the novice, to determine the type and location of a snow holiday, a handy reference for the regular skier who delights in travelling to the less frequented parts, as well as an incentive to the tourist to explore virgin snowfields. In the time available for preparation it has not been possible to provide a complete record, but it will serve its purpose, pending additional particulars. All members in possession of data or photographs likely to be of value in this connection are asked to communicate with the writer. I desire to place on record appreciation of the good work performed by many friends—residents of the foothills—who provided data wherewith to check records. I also extend thanks to Mr. Roy Weston for his valuable co-operation in assisting to compile the material.

I urge the necessity for reconnaissance, because of the possibility of huts being burnt down. At the present time, one of the Wellington huts is in ashes, but particulars are included in the following notes only because of the definite statement that it will be rebuilt before winter sets in.

The owners of most of the following shelters have given permission for their use. This permission applies to all Club members on their taking certain precautions. (1) Apply for permission. (2) Before leaving, see that all fires are properly extinguished. (3) Provide a stock of wood, including kindling material, properly dry stored. (4) Take every precaution during occupation to avoid contamination of the water supply. (5) Leave the hut cleaner than when found. It should be borne in mind that a suitably worded application asking for permission to use a hut not only solicits authority but definitely excludes all "hut crashers."

There is a moral obligation on all members to follow this procedure and if it is faithfully performed we can refute all responsibility for damage. A few years ago a magnificently equipped hut, Higgins Hut, on Bennison's Plains, near Mt. Tamboritha, was burnt down as the result of the carelessness of a touring party. It is hoped that the good name which skiers enjoy amongst mountain folk will not be marred as a result of a similar happening, or in any other way which is due to the lack of consideration.

In order to avoid confusion consequent upon some huts having two names and the necessity of instituting a scheme which provides for new huts taking a consecutive number from the district in which they are erected, I am dividing certain groups into districts. Each district will be indicated by a letter and each shelter in the district by a consecutive number. This method, it is thought, will prove the most suitable means of identification.

The districts are:—A, St. Bernard; B, Hotham; C, Feathertop; D, Buffalo; E, Bogong; F, Bogong High Plains; G, Buller-Cobbler-Howitt-Clear; H, Skene; I, Federation-Torbreck-Lake Mountain; J, Donna Buang-St. Clair; K, Baw Baws; L, Wellington; M, Dargo High Plains; N, Baldhead.



R. Weston.

1: Dibbins Hut. 2: S.C.V. Hut, Donna Buang. 3: Razorback Hut. 4: S.E.C. Hut, Pretty Valley. 5: Kelly's Hut. 6: Monarch Mine Hut. 7: Weston's Hut, B.H.P. 8: Lawler's Hut, Upper Kiewa.

### District A—St. Bernard.

**Chalet.**—St. Bernard Hospice (Mr. B. Rush), via Harrietteville. Location: On the Bright-Omeo Alpine Road, 13 miles from Harrietteville, 26 Bright, 6 Hotham Heights, 40 Omeo. Altitude 4,900 feet. Accommodation 16 people. A comfortably built galvanised-iron structure, furnished with all conveniences. It is the only Alpine House in Victoria possessing a license. St. Bernard caters well for enthusiastic skiers of a novice type and permits of ski-ing on some sheltered slope regardless of weather. A variety of short and fascinating tours is available. Opportunities for exploratory trips towards Dargo and Howitt abound. It is staffed throughout the year and is connected with Bright Exchange by telephone. Bookings direct.

**Shelters.**—A.1.: **Monarch Mine.** Several huts. Communications c/o Mr. V. Wraith, Harrietteville. Location, Harrietteville-St. Bernard Road, east side; distance 7 miles from the former, 6 from the latter. Altitude about 4,000 feet. Well constructed buildings of galvanized iron. When the use of these huts is anticipated permission should be sought, as it is possible that unoccupied huts are kept locked.

**A2: Country Road Board Hut,** St. Bernard. Location, 250 yards north-west of Hospice, below road. Altitude, 4,700 feet. Size, 18 x 12 feet. Construction, galvanized iron. Equipment, bunks for four people; limited utensils; axe.

**A3: Luke's Hut.** Owners, H. Treasure and Sons. "Castleburn." Stratford. Location, 1¼ miles south from Mt. St. Bernard Hospice, 8 chains from road on eastern side. In a gully at the southern end of second cutting from Hospice. Altitude, 4,300 feet. Size, about 12 x 20. Construction, slab walls, iron roof. Equipment: A table and bunks for 4 people. Water a few yards below hut.

**A4: Gow and Howard Hut.** Owners, Gow and Howard, Harrietteville. Location, St. Bernard. One mile from Hospice, 100 yards west of track to the Twins. Altitude, 4,600 feet. Construction, log sides, iron roof. Equipment: Table and bunks for six people. Abundant water handy.

**A5: Mt. Murray Hut.** Owners, Beveridge Bros., Brookside. Location, Mt. Murray, on Great Divide, west of St. Bernard, 100 yards south-east from Stockyard, which is on Divide. Altitude, 4,500 feet (approximate). Size, 10 x 12 feet. Construction, log sides, iron roof. Water available close by.

### District B—Hotham.

**Chalet—Hotham Heights:** Controlled by Victorian Railways Commissioners. Location, on Mt. Higginbotham, ¾ mile from summit of Mt. Hotham. Distance from Harrietteville by road 20 miles; by Bon Accord track 10 miles; Omeo by road, 34 miles. Altitude, 5,800 feet. A substantially constructed stone building with accommodation for 31 people. It is staffed throughout the year. Hot water and telephone are installed. Reservations at Government Tourist Bureau. Hotham Heights is suitably situated amongst some of the finest ski-ing country in the State. With an early start and a light pack, the journey from St. Bernard, which is the most popular approach, is delightful in fine weather. In unfavourable weather the journey may become arduous even to the strongest of ski runners. All varieties of slopes and tours are available.



Principal Huts on Bogong High Plains and District

**Shelters.**—**B1: Blowhard Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location, Mt. Blowhard,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles from Hotham Heights, on the east side of St. Bernard road. Altitude, 5,370 feet. Size, 18 x 12 feet. Construction, galvanized iron. Equipment, nil. Water in gully on eastern side.

**B2: Diamantina Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location: Junction of Razorback Ridge and Mt. Hotham; on the south side of St. Bernard-Hotham Road.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Hotham Heights. Altitude, 5,743 feet. Size, 18 x 12 feet. Construction, galvanized iron, bunks for four people. Water available.

**B3: Bon Accord Hut.** Controlled by Tourist Committee. Location, Bon Accord Spur. Distance from Hotham Heights  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles, Harrietteville 7 miles. Altitude, 4,400 feet. Size, 16 x 10 feet. Construction: Well built galvanized iron shelter with window. Equipment, good bunk. Accommodation 4 people, straw palissades. Water is obtainable 150 yards down gully on northern side.

**B4: Lawler's Hut.** Owner, M. Lawler, Freeburgh. Location, Mt. Higginbotham; adjacent to Hotham Heights. Altitude, 5,800 feet. Size, 18 x 10 feet. Construction, galvanized iron, with floor and two windows. Equipment, Shelf bunk for 6 people. Water near by.

**B5: Whisky Flat Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location, in a well sheltered position, on the Bright-Omeo Alpine Road. Distance from Hotham Heights 3 miles, Omeo 31 miles. Altitude, 5,200 feet. Size, 18 x 12

feet. Construction, galvanized iron with window but no floor. Equipment, nil. Water down gully on north side.

**B6: Dinner Plain Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location, Favourably situated on the Bright-Omeo Alpine Road. Distance from Hotham Heights 7 miles, Omeo 27 miles. Altitude, 5,020 feet. Size 18 x 12 feet. Construction, galvanized iron, no window or floor. Equipment limited to a table. Water supply adjacent.

**B7: Boggy Creek Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location, on the Bright-Omeo Alpine Road. Distance from Hotham Heights 12 miles, Omeo 22 miles. Altitude, 4,200 feet. Size 18 x 12 feet. A well constructed galvanized iron building with window but no floor. Equipment limited to bunk for 1 person and a table. Water near by. The locality of this hut is the average winter snow line. Note: Although Hotham Heights is 56 miles further from Melbourne via Omeo than Bright, the Omeo route provides a safe all-weather approach. Cars can be safely left at Boggy Creek and the journey on ski to Hotham Heights undertaken by the absolute novice.

**B8: Jim and Jack Hut.** Owners, Country Roads Board. Location, at Jim and Jack Creek, on the Bright-Omeo Alpine Highway. Distance from Omeo 9 miles, Hotham Heights 25 miles. Altitude, 3,000 feet. Size 18 x 12 feet. Construction, a galvanized iron building without equipment but adjacent to good water.

#### District C—Feathertop

**Chalet—The Bungalow, Mt. Feathertop.** Controlled by the Victorian Railways Commissioners. Location, on Mt. Feathertop, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Summit. Distance from Harrierville by pack track,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles, from Hotham Heights by the Razorback Ridge, 9 miles. Altitude, 5,000 feet. A well-built and comfortable iron chalet which accommodates 24 people. Hot water and telephone installed. Reservations, Government Tourist Bureau. Ease of approach in all weathers renders the Feathertop Chalet a popular resort during the months June to September, when a regular staff is on duty. Special arrangements may be made at other periods. Fine practice and racing grounds are available. Serious tours along the Razorback to Hotham and to Bogong High Plains by Blair's Hut are recommended only to skiers with experience.

**Shelters—C1: Feathertop Hut.** Owners, Harrierville Progress Association. Location, Mt. Feathertop,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Summit, 70 yards north of Bungalow. Altitude, 5,000 feet. Size 19 x 11 feet. Construction, galvanised iron, lined with pine, wooden floor and one window. Equipment includes bunks for 6 people, table, shelves, axe and billies. Water is conveniently obtainable.

**C2: Razorback Hut.** Controlled by the Tourist Committee. Location: On Razorback Ridge. Distance from Feathertop Bungalow 4 miles, Diamantina Hut  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Altitude, 5,350 feet. Size, 14 x 10 feet. Construction, a galvanized iron hut with window but no floor. Equipment is limited to a table. Water is not readily accessible. Locate spring down gully on west side of ridge.

#### District D—Buffalo.

**Chalet—The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo, National Park.** Owners: Controlled by the Victorian Railway Commissioners. Location, on Buffalo Plateau. Distance from Porepunkah 18 miles by graded road. This Chalet, which is

4,370 feet above sea level, has accommodation for 200 people, whose needs are provided for in a manner comparable with chalets of this type situated in other parts of the world. Although the snow season is comparatively short, due to a lower altitude than other ski-ing resorts, it is recommended as a suitable place for novices. When ample snow is available, all phases of the sport are obtainable. Hot and cold water in bathrooms and bedrooms. Telephone, Post Office, Savings Bank, Cafeteria. Reservations: Tourist Bureau.

**Shelter.—D1: Crystal Brook Hut.** Owner, Public Works Department. Location, from Chalet  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles by road and 3 miles by short cuts. 100 yards from Reservoir. Altitude, 4,550 feet. Size, 20 x 12 feet. Construction: Hardwood frame, with galvanised iron walls and roof. One window, table and seat. Earthen floor. Wood and water conveniently obtainable.

**D2: Lake Hut.** Owners, Public Works Department. Location, on right-hand bank of Lake Catani, near the lake ski slide. Distance from Chalet  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles by road. Altitude 4,250 feet. Size 20 x 10 feet. Construction: Walls and roof of galvanised iron. Chimney of stone and galvanised iron. Floor is made of 6 x 1 hardwood. There are two windows, one large bench and seats built round two sides of the walls. A porch is built over the entrance and is used for the storage of dry firewood.

**D3: Cathedral Hut.** Owners, Public Works Department. Location, 5 miles along the Horn Road, and 3 miles by short cuts from Chalet. Altitude, 5,000 feet. Size, 20 x 10 feet. Construction: Framework of sawn hardwood, sides and roof of galvanised iron. One window. Table 14 feet in length. Earthen floor. Wood and water 100 yards.

**D4: The Cresta Hut.** Owners, the Victorian Railways Commissioners. Location, on Cresta Ski Run. Distance from Chalet 6 miles by road. Altitude, 5,100 feet. Size 30 x 22 feet. Construction: Weatherboard and galvanized iron, earthen floor. Equipment, seats and two tables, one of 20 feet in length. Built-in cupboard and metal sink. Water storage, 500 gallons. Wood is dry-stored in shed. Ambulance boxes and stretchers in hut. Telephone is connected to Chalet.

From above: Miller's Hut,  
Bon Accord Hut,  
Higgins' Hut, Maddison's Hut.

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**D5: The Horn Hut.** Owners, Victorian Railways Commissioners. Location, on the Main Horn Road. Distance from Chalet 8½ miles by road. Altitude, 5,200 feet. Size 40 x 35 feet. Construction, weatherboard walls, galvanized iron roof. Walls and ceilings lined with pine. The floor is linoleum covered. Building contains 4 bedrooms, 1 large living room, kitchen and pantry, two bathrooms, two W.C.'s. Equipment includes 14 wire mattresses, 14 chairs, 3 tables, blankets, crockery, cutlery, ambulance box and stretcher, central heating, stove, fire extinguisher, water storage, 600 gallons.

(This article will be completed in the next issue.)

