

Ski Area North of Virginia Soon Will Be Just a Memory

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VIRGINIA — The Lookout Mountain Ski Area just north of here on Highway 53, scene of a dozen years of outdoor fun and the crux of a civic enterprise that encouraged great expectations, soon will be just a memory.

The upper half of the spacious two-story chalet that survived the onslaught of wreckers is to be moved from the premises starting Monday, along with the massive towers and other apparatus of the two-seat chairlift.

The lift, incidentally, was the first of its kind to be erected in Minnesota during the early years of mushrooming interest in recreational skiing in the Tri-State Region.

Slopes of Lookout Mountain are situated on lands within the boundaries of Superior National Forest and the ski area's demise was a result of failure of its management and the U.S. Forest Service to agree on a number of operational points.

The most recent owner of the ski area, Herbert F. Pfremmer, a Virginia area businessman, was given a Sept. 30 deadline to get all of his holdings out of the ski lands. This includes the buildings, the lifts, and snow-making equipment. This action was taken by the federal government after negotiations extending over several years.

Wreckers have demolished the cement block lower half of the chalet to permit lowering of the upper half — of frame construction — so it can be moved. The chalet at one time included a popular restaurant called the Four Seasons which was open throughout the year, along with a ski sales shop, fireplace lounge, quarters for the ski school and the ski patrol and living facilities for some of the ski area personnel.

Pfremmer said the remaining

Even though the mole lives underground, its soft fur is so constructed that no earthy stain defiles its glossy smoothness.

portion of the chalet will be moved to land that he owns at the intersection of Highways 53 and 169, a few hundred yards west of the ski area. It is there that Pfremmer operates his North Country Traders, Inc. business.

The rope tows and the grooming equipment have been sold, said Pfremmer, but the chairlift also will be stored on land near the highway intersection. Pfremmer said he plans to use the chalet in his business but the chairlift remains for sale.

Lookout Mountain opened in the fall of 1959 after a stock company was organized in Virginia the year before. The project was termed a civic enterprise intended to increase winter visitors to the area in order to gain a better balance with the summer influx.

After financial troubles the ski area was acquired a few years ago by Pfremmer who improved it and added camping and other

summer activities in an effort to increase its year-around use.

Two years ago skiing operations were brought to a halt but even last year efforts were made in several quarters to solve the resort's problems.

Over the years, Lookout Mountain was the scene of some of the early races for young skiers under sanction of the Central Division, United States Ski Association, and many outstanding skiers competed.

The Mont Sabi Ski Club, headquartered at Lookout Mountain, earned a wide reputation for the extent and excellence of its ski school operations. Each season may Northern Minnesota youngsters learned to ski at nominal cost.

Field observers report that the black vulture, turkey vulture and California condor are being crowded out by civilization, with the latter bordering on extinction.



BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY—What do Bayfield area charter boat skippers do on their days off? They fish, and here are some nine- and 10-pound lake trout to prove it. Displaying their catches are John Deutsch, Washburn, captain of the Coho which operates out of Pikes Bay (left), and Robert Leher, Washburn, captain of the Paula K II, home port Bayfield. The trout were caught off Michigan Island of the Apostles, said Deutsch. The trout are coming back to Lake Superior in large numbers, he added.