

It was at the RCAF station just a few hundred yards from where our plane landed that we were to stay. Here there was one hut set aside for visitors, whether the touring scientists or the reinforcements who come during each air-lift to help dispose of the freight. The hut was comfortable and well-equipped. It had showers but the visitor was enjoined to consider carefully before using this luxury more than once a fortnight. The water supply is a constant problem at the Arctic stations. At some places a hole is cut through ice eight feet thick, with only a pick to do the job. A heated hut is placed over the hole and a portable water-tank is filled with a hose — probably one of the most disagreeable jobs in the Arctic. But the water is good. At one satellite station the men had to go miles for fresh water until, with rare consideration, nature deposited an iceberg (which is, of course, always fresh water) just a hundred yards from the front door of the building where the men lived. Now the residents just chip their drinking water from the iceberg. Another ingenious solution to the problem of water supply is to sink a pipe into a fresh-water lake each autumn, then to fill it with gasoline to prevent it from freezing and burn off the gas each time before water is pumped.

At the center of the cluster of buildings on the RCAF station at Resolute is the mess. It includes the dining-room and sitting-room, a large recreation-room and a remarkably well-equipped kitchen in the centre, with living quarters spreading out at each end of the building. Like all the buildings on the station it is made of plywood with excellent insulation. Its windows have three layers of glass permanently sealed and the air from outside is introduced by a small sort of cupboard-door above each window. The temperature inside ranges from 70 to 75 degrees. This is the center of life in the Arctic community. The men gather here for their meals, to read, to play table tennis, to see the occasional film or just to sit and listen to records. The record-player is probably the most exploited piece of machinery in the Arctic. Its relentlessly turning gears grind out a succession of popular dance-tunes during the station's waking hours. In April this year the top of the "Hit Parade" seemed to be held by *Shrimp Boats are Coming*, which had as a close competitor *Dance Me Loose*. For better or for worse, the record-player was a reminder of civilization.

A Separate Community

Although the airmen and the meteorologists see each other frequently, the weather station down the road from the RCAF airstrip is an entirely separate community. It was the original settlement of Resolute, built long before there was any permanent air-strip and before so much was known about construction in the Arctic. Consequently its buildings are older. The location of buildings in an Arctic community is a difficult problem. If the huts are too far apart, the staff is put to inconvenience when going from living-quarters to work or from work to the mess. In the height of an Arctic blizzard there can be real danger in wide separation of buildings, for men can be completely lost when they are only 25 yards away from shelter. On the other hand the community must not be too compact for there is the ever-present hazard of fire. Although there is a great variety and quantity of fire-fighting equipment, there is no water for fire fighting and the buildings are exceedingly dry. The loss of a building is a tragedy which may cause acute discomfort and seriously hamper work for months until new buildings supplies can be brought in by air or ship. There have been fires in Arctic stations, but the alertness of the staff and the efficiency of the fire-fighting equipment has usually been equal to the occasion.

The building which houses the ionospheric station at Resolute is modern, well-equipped and constructed in accordance with the best information available on building for Arctic needs. Next to it, however, is a structure whose design has been known to other Northern people for generations. It is a Finnish steam-bath designed some time ago by a scientist of Finnish ancestry. It was made of packing-cases with a subterranean cavern heated by an old wood stove. It is particularly remarkable