



(Continued from page 7)

make the grade more manageable. Approximately 2,700 feet of power line would be constructed to provide power from the foot of Dugway up to the lodge.

The proposed golf course was located on both sides of Dugway Road. A pumping station would have provided water from the Shepherd River. The proposed waterfront facility on Burnt Meadow Pond was at the site of the current boat launch on Route 160. It was to include a swimming beach, picnic area, snack bar, changing rooms, latrines, and a 100-car parking lot.

Obviously financing for this large project was an issue. As the town board could not negotiate with the federal government, the non-profit was changed to Burnt Meadow Mountain Recreation Association (BMMRA) in 1966. Although the Farmers Home Administration approved \$425,000 in financing in 1969, the local group decided not to proceed with the entire project because they felt it required too large of a build-out. The extensive plan was reduced to a smaller ski area with a single clubhouse on the northeastern side of the mountain. In June of 1971, a FHA loan of \$275,000 was finalized, contingent on selling 300 memberships to area families. Association president Kenneth Walker and others went door to door to gain members. Hopes were that the ski area would generate enough revenue to build the beach area the following summer.

Construction of the 3148' Stadeli T-Bar began in November of 1971. The lift climbed 675 vertical feet and served three trails up to one mile long. The trails were labeled A, B, and C from the south to the north. Trail C's top third was the most challenging, described by one newspaper as being steep and bone-chattering. A modest clubhouse was constructed at the base of the mountain, with a large porch and windows facing the slopes. A paved access road from Route 160 was built, as well as a 175-car parking lot. The ski area's opening day was February 5th, 1972.

Unfortunately, poor snow, high energy costs, and competition were not kind to Burnt Meadow Mountain Ski Area. Evergreen Valley in Stoneham had just opened with night skiing and Pleasant Mountain in Bridgton had opened its East Side trails. Burnt Meadow, without snowmaking or lighting, could not compete. Although future expansion plans included more lifts and a second base lodge, there weren't enough skiers to support the initial infrastructure. BMMRA handed the property over to the FHA in 1977.

In 1980, Wendell Pierce of Big Rock Ski Area in Mars Hill purchased Burnt Meadow and reopened it as Zodiac Skiway. This venture was also unsuccessful and the ski area closed for good in 1982. It was assumed that Pierce would remove the lift for use at Mars Hill, but he instead used one from Evergreen Valley,



(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

which had met a similar fate as Burnt Meadow. Today the T-bar lift is remarkably intact along the entire route and clear of trees underneath. The ski trails are grown in but can still be discerned on satellite views of the mountain. The clubhouse was converted to a private residence and the porch removed.

This project was headed up by a dedicated, enthusiastic group of volunteers who wanted to create positive growth in Brownfield. Despite its financial struggles, Burnt Meadow Mountain created happy memories for those who were lucky enough to experience it. Many of our members have shared stories of skiing there as children and young adults. A hardy few still skin up and ski down the lift trail, but for the most part, nature has reclaimed Burnt Meadow Mountain Ski Area.

**A special thanks to the following for the monetary donations: Catherine Coleman, Kelsey Witte-Maas, Tylor Maas, Town of Brownfield, Janet Smith, and all who donated at the Cookie Walk.**

### **Brownfield Historical Society Membership Form**

Please use this form when submitting your dues or monetary donations.

This will help the treasurer with bookkeeping and keeping addresses current.

Please submit gifts and dues to:

**The Brownfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 264, Brownfield, ME 04010-0264**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Membership Dues: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10.00 due every year)

Donations: \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime Membership \_\_\_\_\_ (\$100.00)