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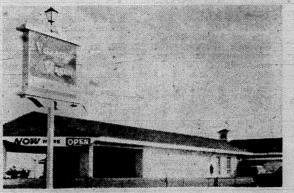
Fun and games at the Village Green

THE OPEN PADDOCKS around Waverley and Notting Hill, east of Mels their bourne, have become one ell jazz of the vigorous growth points of our new Australia. Light-industrial factories grow like mushol. The rooms. The 'skyscraper block of Monash University rears over the trees on he chief the southern horizon.

> And now amenity has arrived spectacularly in the form of a big new hotel on the corner of Springvale and Ferntree Gully

h when It is called "Village Green," and it spreads out on acres of car-park broken by lawns of ently at the desired color, in long, low ub near wings arranged in roughly an aeroplane plan. It is described out 150 as a motor notel, which means of course the best of both worlds: drive-up, self-contained bedrooms as well as enormous bars and big restaurant.

> A drive-in bottle department under a great porte-cochere projects forward towards the carpet is red with a small black corner of the busy highways, overcheck, wall - paper is A tantalising multiformity of claret, blinds are ruby. Tablebottles spread over an enor- cloths, napkins and the vests mous wall area beckons the of the waiters in the restaurant parched plains.



New England plus Olde England

The colors of the whole enterprise also beckon. Dazzling white walls and charcoal roof and shutters complement the fresh green of the lawns and the signboards. It looks like an oasis, and it is one.

Inside the public spaces a warm, welcoming theme in red and black is developed. The walls are dark red clinker bricks laid in black mortar, the

cessories are black. There are also panels and screens of dark wood and touches of bright brass.

The care and taste exercised in the selection of the colors represent high standards in many other things: in the airconditioning, the food, wine, the soft lights and muffled sounds of festivity. It is all so different from the old Australian pubfrom either the cast-iron country style or the lavatory-fronted suburban one-that it might be in a different world from them.

And it is. This is the new passing wayfarer on these are scarlet. Chairs and settle- Australia of new industries and seats, ashtrays and other ac- new universities and new stanto find no Australian influence in its design.

ROBIN BOYD visits a new Aus-

tralian hotel — and is dismayed

dards in comfort. The one and only pity is that it is often so unnecessarily un - Australian.

Village Green appears to be an entirely Australian venture which rightly and deliberately turns its back on the careless, ignorant recent past of Australian hotels. A pity then that, after turning, it found itself facing overseas. The visual and social character of the enterprise is a merry mixture of nostalgic snippets from Olde England or New England.

The name itself (note the absense of a "the") sets the tone. It is written on green and white fretworked signposts that are pure Massachusetts style. The building maintains the New England (U.S.) stylistic influence. although materials rer. in local, For instance, here the walls are brick instead of clapboard, but they are still painted white. And here the roof is of cement tiles instead of wood shingles, but they are tiles of shingle color.

The little white lantern that sits on the roof at the crossing of wings, topped by a weather cock, is fine Minute Man stuff, atmosphere; More relevantly, it recalls the little exotic and transporting. It

symbol of the Howard Johnson chain of restaurants across the United States. Louvred shutters and multipane windows complete the 'onial allusions in a style that we never saw in these colonies.

Indoors the nostalgia is

stronger and a trifle more diversified. Oil lamps hold the candles on the restaurant tables and carriage lanterns hold electric lights. Old prints maps and ships decorate the walls. Departmental names have a quite alien cuteness. The restaurant is called "The Caire's Cellar": then there are "The Village Club," "The Village Tavern" and the "Tap Room." Some Norman armor and Westernstyle saloon swing doors add to the anonymous, timeless confusedness in which the only Australian notes are the twin plastic lady and gentleman silhouettes on the respective toilet

None of it is meant to be taken very seriously, of course, It is all done for the sake of deliberately

is clever window-dressing or stage-setting.

It is so well done that it may trick some people into accepting it as real architecture, and this would be a pity; but apart from that it is harmless. And it is bound to be successful. The decorative fun and games will attract many and certainly did not spoil my good lunch.

Yet there remains an element ce of national tragedy here. All Bu the inspiration for the char- th acter of this enterprise came th from outside Australia. There is not the least logical justification m for this. An atmosphere just as warm and inviting could be ce built up out of genuine elements en -colonial if you must, or modern-of Australian origin.

Having mastered the extraordinarily difficult physical problems of erecting and appointing such a haven of comfort, there is a touch of tragedy in the fact that Australia at this time seems unable to rally the extra intellectual effort needed to find artistic inspiration here ar at home.

ROBIN BOYD, who is going overseas again, will continue to write The Australian during his absence.