

The scarfs and strips of cloth tied to four of the rafter-poles represented vows and pledged by various individuals. During the year anyone might have some special reason for wanting a prayer answered--the sickness of a loved one, or deliverance from danger, etc.--and vow to tie cloth on the rafters of the Sun Dance Lodge. Thus these items represented prayers and pledges of many different individuals.

The placing of brush around the outside of the lodge frame to form the walls completed the erection of the structure. Loads of small long-leaved cottonwood trees had been brought into the camp ground. The brush consisted of either small trees or long brushy limbs of larger trees. These trees and limbs were placed upright around the outside of the lodge frame. The trunk of the tree rested on the ground and the upper part of the tree rested against the stringer, leaning inward at a slight angle. The trees and limbs used were long enough to reach from the ground to the stringers and extend somewhat above them. I would estimate that the stringers were from 8 to 10 feet above the ground. The rafter-poles looked about 35 or 50 feet long. The center post was perhaps 30 feet high. There were 16 upright posts set in a circle forming the supports for the outside of the lodge, and 16 rafter-poles linking the uprights to the center post. The placing of brush to form the walls began before all of the rafter-poles were in place.

Before all the brush had been laid on, the ceremonial paraphernalia was carried out of the Rabbit Tipi and brought into the Sun Dance lodge. The men carrying this equipment were probably priests or ceremonial leaders. Four men carried things. Among the items they carried were an oblong bundle whose outer wrapping was a patchwork quilt (possibly a bedroll but it looked small for this), a square rawhide bundle or envelope, another bundle, a hoop with eagle feathers attached (the Medicine Wheel), and a buffalo skull. About this time brush was placed around the outside of the lodge so that it was not possible to watch the placement of