

SAVING THE COLO/HUNTER

Prior to the New Year, the Army undertook some improvements of roads and the airstrip in the Gaspers region. An Army camp was held near Mt. Darcy. On 1st January the Army's Proclaimed Training Area expired.

Objections from the Minister for Lands, Mr. Crabtree, has meant that the Proclaimed Training Area will not be renewed. Though the Army can override Mr. Crabtree's objections this appears unlikely. Still, however, the position of the Army in the area is not entirely clear. However large Army exercises or developments in the area now appear unlikely.

The Minister for the Environment (who is in charge of National Parks), Mr. Landa, has placed restrictions on the forestry activities in the Putty region, to prevent any further development until the future of the Colo/Hunter region has been decided. Naturally this has been met with opposition from forestry interests.

The next few months are likely to be a crucial time for the Colo/Hunter wilderness. It may well decide whether the area is to become a national park. Those people interested in the Colo/Hunter are urged to bring pressure on Mr. Wran and Mr. Landa for the dedication of a Colo/Hunter National Park. Letters should be written to these men now.

WHATS NEW

Rockclimbing at Mt. York.

Simple Foods for the Pack (\$6) and Health Trail Food Book (\$5) - both covering foods for walking, prepared at home or away.

Bushwalking and Mountaincraft Leadership Handbook - a Victorian publication (\$3).

The Green Pages - An ACF conservation groups directory (\$10).

Acacias of NSW - A full listing of wattles of NSW (\$7.50). Available from Mrs. Heins, 63 Waitara Pde, Hurstville. 2220.

Waterbird Aviation Pty. Ltd. offer a float-plane access to the more remote areas of Tasmania. Five passengers or 3/4 tonnes in freight-charter rate \$110 per hour - Bathurst Harbour a one hour flight.

Minox have a small 35mm camera (pocket size) full frame with light meter, which according to reports, gives good results (\$140).

WELBY

SLEEPING BAGS

PART I - FILLINGS

A sleeping bag represents one of the single most expensive items of bushwalking gear. Over the years there has been advances in bag design and also there has been a vast improvement in synthetic fillings.

This article will look at the various fillings used in sleeping bags and the next one will concentrate on design features.

The main function of a sleeping bag is for it to act as an insulator. It does not generate heat. The bag will help retain body temperature by ensuring that heat is not lost faster than it is generated. It must, however, allow water vapour, breathed out from the body, to escape without condensing in the bag.

The best insulator is dry, still air. The function of the filling is to provide a trap for air. The best filling is one which traps the maximum volume of air per unit volume of itself. In a sleeping bag the best filling would be the one that gives the greatest 'loft' for a given amount of filling. Loft is the term used to describe the expansion of the filling to fill the compartment in which it is contained. The better the insulation quality of the filling, the less the loft required to keep the sleeper warm.

As more filling is added to a compartment the loft and therefore the insulation increases. This continues until a point is reached beyond which the down cannot expand to its maximum capability. The loft of a sleeping bag can be measured with the bag laid flat, fluffed up with no one in the bag. Only half this loft keeps the sleeper warm, the other half is compressed underneath and contributes little. The more filling a bag has the longer it will retain its loft value.

The value of the insulation can be altered by many factors such as wind, humidity, ground insulation, metabolism, clothing worn, shelter etc.

TYPES OF FILLINGS

1. **DOWN:** This has the best insulating value in dry conditions. The best quality Duck or Goose down will loft up to 650 cu.ins/oz. Most superdown fillings sold in sleeping bags however loft between 450-550 cu.ins/oz. Superdown contains a small quantity of feathers. Featherdown contains a larger amount of feathers and has less loft for a given weight, and for a given loft is less efficient than down. It would seem about 25% more loft with a featherdown filling than with a good superdown filling to achieve the same insulation.

Down is easily compressed - and this makes it convenient to carry when walking. The main disadvantage of down, apart from its cost, is that when wet its loft reduces to virtually zero, it has little insulating value and takes a long time to dry out.

2. **SYNTHETICS:** Over recent years various types of synthetic fillings have come onto the market. The most commonly used are Dacron Fibrefill II, Hollofil and Polarguard. Weight for weight down lofts about 40% more. Also the synthetics for a given loft are less efficient than down. It would seem that you need to have 20-30% more loft to achieve the same insulation as down. Fibrefill II lofts about 350 cu.ins/oz. for example but this would not be as warm as say featherdown with the same loft factor.

However, the synthetic fillings have one important advantage in that they absorb very little water and maintain nearly all their loft when wet. Also they dry out much faster than down.

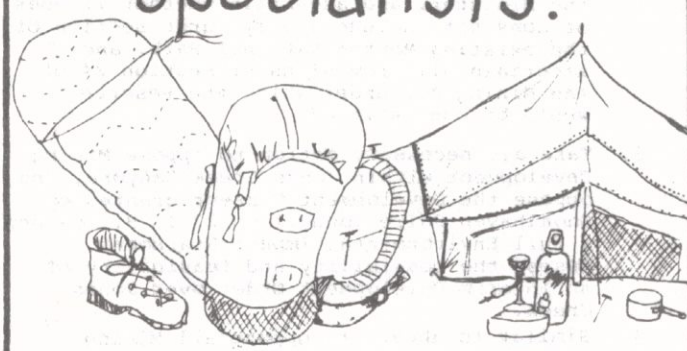
Synthetic filled bags do not compress as well as down making them bulkier to carry, but they do provide better under body insulation.

CONCLUSION

For the filling of sleeping bags down is by far still the best. However with the price of down increasing markedly and with synthetic filling being far superior in wet conditions they should be considered. It can be expected that more advances in synthetics will occur in the next few years.

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1979 Programme

March 20 -	Himalayan Odyssey	
April 21 -	Difficult Alpine	\$1400
May 5-6 -	Tarana & Blue Mountains -	Grade Med. \$30
May 19-20 -	Warrumbungles -	Grade Hard \$30
June 2-3 -	Three Sisters & Mt. Victoria -	Grade Easy \$30
June 16 -	Sydney Cliffs -	Grade Easy \$15
August 30 -	Kosciusko Ice Climbing -	Write for Details

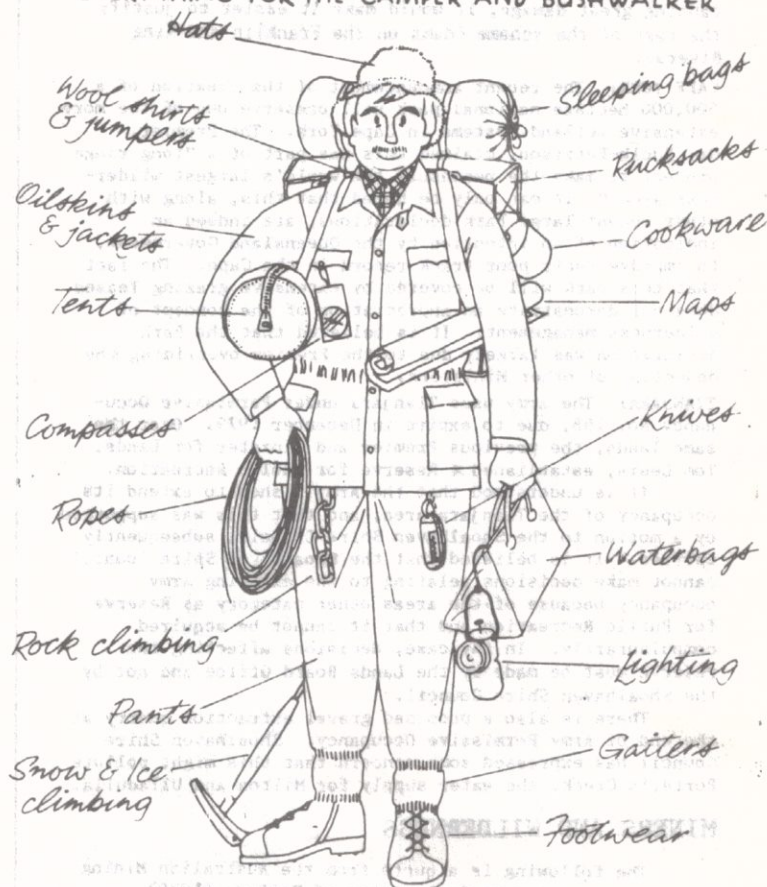
Advance Bookings Advisable. Wet weather programmes usually organised, along with a full film schedule for Saturday evenings. You bring only camping necessities, sand-shoes and a tent if you have one, plus food and cooking apparatus where applicable (summer etc.)

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FBW REUNION 1979

Gunderman Creek - March 31, April 1.

How to get there:

From Northern side of Hawkesbury at Wiseman's Ferry, 14km (road) East to turnoff North. Car parking within 1km of campsite. Bush to be arranged from Strathfield Station. (notify FBW or Club for bookings).

Saturday afternoon:

FBW Policy Discussion Groups.

Informal workshops to explain current policies and seek ideas and comments.

Topics:

- Management principles for walking areas: wilderness and other (Huts, tracks, markets etc.)
- New members: promotion of Clubs; introduction of new members to activities, skills, ethics; provision of equipment; joint education ventures, eg FBW Outdoor Workshops.
- Roles of FBW: Future of SCR; finances; paid executive secretary; newsletter; Future of Ball and Reunion or alternatives; involvement of country Clubs.

Campfires:

- Two campfires will be provided, one for yarning, the other for Club performances and group singing.
- Clubs requested to rehearse acts in advance: music, dance, recitation, tale, skit, striptease or whatever.
- Individual acts welcome, as per Club acts.
- Group singing will be led for key and time. Please bring musical instruments for prior tuning. Melody or chord accompaniment in common keys (C,D,G,E and/or capo) would be very welcome, no written music available. Walkers Songbook (Kamerukas) is standard.

Sunday Morning:

Photographic Print Competition.

- Section 1: Best print, any date, bush or bushwalking theme.
- Section 2: Best 'then and now' pair of prints; bush landscape, pre and post 1970.
- Section 3: Best nostalgic print, 1969 or before; people, places, objects and/or events.

Entries will be carefully treated, hung in individual plastic bags out of rain and direct sunlight. Please assist by providing prints in a suitable bag with a caption card showing place, date, names of subjects, story, plus name of exhibitor.

Tug o'war:

