

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION INC.

Seventy nine years of community development
ISSN 0814 - 2054

No. 149

February 2004

Castlecrag Progress Association

6/77 Edinburgh Road,
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www.castlecrag.org.au

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Jill Newton

Howard Rubie

Gay Spies

John Steel

General Meeting

Tuesday 27 April 8pm

Castlecrag Community Centre

Membership renewals for the
Progress Association are now
due for 2004
(please see page 6)

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Please send all correspondence
and membership renewals to
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The Crag is printed by
Bertram Printing
Bertram Street
Chatswood
Tel. 9415 1070

What Traffic Problem?

Castlecrag residents, in common with most other Sydneysiders, put traffic high on their list of concerns. Requests to 'solve the traffic problem' have been made to the Progress Association since it was first established in November 1925 and we have devised various schemes to better manage traffic matters within our suburb.

Concerns over speeding and pedestrian safety on Edinburgh Road have been a long-standing issue. As reported in The Crag on numerous occasions, our efforts resulted in a study of local traffic issues in Edinburgh Road, which led to a Local Area Traffic Management Plan (LATM) in 1999. Construction of the works was approved for 2002-03, but opposition by some residents resulted in most of the scheme being postponed and only the roundabout at Rutland Avenue was constructed.

Residents I have spoken with have commented on the success of the roundabout and a number of those living along Edinburgh Road have approached the Progress

Association to urge that the remainder of the scheme be implemented. As this is a matter of general concern in Castlecrag, we have asked Council's Transport Management Officer, Tony Lehmann, to attend our General Meeting on 27 April to advise residents of the current status of the LATM scheme and to hear your views on the subject. Please come along to the meeting and have your say.

We can report a positive outcome regarding the dangerous corner in the vicinity of Nos. 78-80 The Bulwark. In response to a submission by the Progress Association, the Local Traffic Committee and resolved that a single row of Raised Reflective Pavement Markers (RRPMs, or 'Cats Eyes') be installed around the bend fronted by No.78 and No.80 The Bulwark at 2m spacings. The Mayor and General Manager adopted this recommendation under delegated authority on 19 March 2004.

I represented the Castlecrag on a sub-committee with delegates

from Northbridge, South Willoughby and Naremburn Progress Associations to review the traffic problems faced by Northbridge residents. Like Castlecrag, Northbridge is a Peninsula suburb and local traffic getting out onto the main arterial roads during peak hour as traffic lights are set to maximise the flow of traffic on the main roads.

The proposal by Northbridge PA that more traffic be diverted down Flat Rock Drive generate some excitement among residents in South Willoughby and Naremburn and we agreed that such diversions do not offer any solutions. The only solution to traffic congestion in large cities is to reduce the number of cars on the roads, by pricing and/or restrictions, and to improve public transport, so the committee was short on specific proposals for Council to consider.

Bob McKillop

Castlecrag Progress Association ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 16 May 2.30pm

Castlecrag Progress Association

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 27 April 2004

Agenda:

Edinburgh Road LATM
And traffic safety
Tony Lehmann, Willoughby Council

All welcome
Community Centre at 8pm
Refreshments provided

Community Bytes

Willoughby Arts Assistance Program

Willoughby City Council is seeking applications for local artists to apply for grants up to \$2000. The Arts Assistance Program aims to provide opportunities for Willoughby residents to develop their potential in arts practices. It covers visual arts, performance, music, literature and multimedia. Applications close on 7 May 2002. For guidelines and application forms, ring 9777 7979 or check Council's Home Page: www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Stoker Playground

Willoughby Council's Open Space Department has drawn up plans for the redevelopment of the Stoke Playground on Edinburgh Road. The design for the new facility incorporates castle features after the names of Castlecrag streets and reserves. Copies of the proposal will be available at the Progress Association General Meeting on 27 April.

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Trees in Castlecrag by Lorraine Cairns

Last year's drought and this year's water restrictions mean that many of our gardens, and the bushland reserves, are stressed. As well as having less water in the soil, trees are being targeted by our native fauna, which includes possums and many native insects. They are looking for a quick meal but finding that there is less to choose from this year.

The way in which native trees respond to these conditions is by survival strategies that they have evolved over eons. Trees reduce their water demand during the tough times by losing leaves, or their smaller branches might die.

In nature, after the stresses are past, trees often recover. Typically, new shoots that have been dormant in the trunk and at the base of the tree spring back to life when the drought ends, much as we see trees recovering after bushfires.

Sadly, we have been seeing a lot of very grand trees chopped down in recent months because they look dead. Given time, they might have recovered.

The most valuable plants in any landscape are the mature trees. These form the basic structure of the bushland and gardens, and will take decades to replace. We are lucky in Castlecrag that many of our special garden trees – Angophoras, Sydney Peppermints, "Old Man Banksia" to name a few – are relics of the original bushland. They keep the links and wildlife pathways

from the bushland through the built-up parts of Castlecrag.

Some of these trees are a hundred years old and more. Replacing them will take longer than our lifetimes.

At present, the possums in our area are feasting on these new shoots and making it hard for some trees (such as Angophoras) to recover. We love the possums, but this is the time to exclude them from favourite trees by a possum guard (see below).

Of course, trees can become stressed because of other causes: for example, changes in drainage, too many nutrients, or insect attack. But care for a tree is worthwhile, and consult an expert if in doubt. The chainsaw should only be a last resort!

So . . . here are a few ideas:

1. Even if a tree appears to be dead, give it a little time to see if it might recover. Seek the advice of an expert arborist.
2. If dead branches might be dangerous, have these removed carefully, but keep the living parts of the tree to recover.
3. Stop possums eating the new regrowth shoots by possum-guards around the trunk.
4. Plant some new native trees to replace the ones which might have been lost in years past. We all enjoy our native birds, so every garden in Castlecrag should have at least two native trees!

An Easy Possum Guard

This works well if there is no direct branch-to-branch contact with other un-guarded trees. You might need to put guards on several trees.

Wrap a sheet of heavy flexible plastic around the tree trunk and secure it with grey duct tape. The plastic needs to be heavy enough