

# THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS  
ASSOCIATION INC.

Seventy nine years of community development  
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*Castlecrag Progress Association*

6/77 Edinburgh Road,  
Castlecrag  
Web page:  
[www.castlecrag.org.au](http://www.castlecrag.org.au)

**President:** John Steel

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Gay Spies

**Secretary:** Elizabeth Lander

**Treasurer:** Diana Jones

**Committee:** Glorean Goldin

Bob McKillop

Peter Moffitt

Jill Newton

Howard Rubie

## General Meetings

**Tuesday 24 August 8 pm**

**Tuesday 26 October 8 pm**

Castlecrag Community Centre

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

The Crag is edited by  
Bob McKillop 9958 4516  
Elizabeth Lander 9958 5384

Please send all correspondence  
and membership renewals to  
the above address.

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## Eric Kaye 1916-2004

*Life Member of the Castlecrag Progress Association*

Castlecrag lost one of its notable and longstanding citizens with the passing of Eric Kaye on 14 June.

The construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge during Eric's teenage years sparked his interest in engineering. He joined the Navy and studied engineering at Technical College in the evenings.

Eric married Rita in 1942. They purchased a block of land at 325 Edinburgh Road in 1948 and got local architect and close friend, Chris Sorensen, to design their house. They then spent many years building this house — indeed, Eric was still working on it 50 years later.

Many, many wonderful memories were created at their home. From their deck perched above Middle Harbour, the Kayes were inspired by the magnificent natural landscape.

During his successful engineering career with the



Eric Kaye

Australian Navy, Eric took possession of the Navy's first computer in the United Kingdom, and spent several years in Washington DC where he and Rita made many close friends and became interested in the human rights movement.

Eric held an abiding love for Castlecrag and established a strong relationship with the whole Castlecrag community. He was a passionate advocate for the natural environment, and it was under Eric's guidance as president of the Castlecrag Progress Association that the

successful campaign against the extension of the Warringah Expressway through the bushland of the northern escarpment of Castlecrag, was fought during the 1970s.

In 1980, Eric was elected to Willoughby Council. He stated that his aim was to preserve Castlecrag's quiet beauty for the enjoyment of Sydney's future generations. He was re-elected in 1983, becoming Deputy Mayor in 1985. His role as an alderman was one in which he took great pride.

Eric served on the advisory committee that prepared an environmental study of Castlecrag for Willoughby Council from 1980. The report, released in 1982, established the basic guidelines for our future development

A natural leader but a self-effacing person, Eric will be fondly remembered and missed by those in the Willoughby and wider community who were fortunate to know and love him.

**Luke Hastings/Editors**

## Castlecrag Conservation Society 2004 MEETING SCHEDULE

**Thursday, 23 September**

**Thursday, 25 November**

All meetings at 8 pm

Interesting Guest Speakers  
All welcome

Castlecrag Community Centre

## Castlecrag Progress Association

**GENERAL MEETING**

**Tuesday 24 August 2004**

**'Come and Have Your Say'**

Key topics include restoration of  
the Griffin Fountain and reports  
by Ward Councillors

Community Centre at 8 pm

## Community Bytes

### Seniors' Shopping Morning

Further to our advice in *The Crag* No. 151, we have a small group of local residents available to help elderly and frail residents with their shopping between 10.15am and 1pm on the LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH. Council transport is arranged to pick everyone up and take you to Chatswood for shopping, banking, Medicare, etc, or our helpers can fulfil shopping lists for those who are not well.

Please call Gloreen Goldin on 9967 9133 or 0418 422 998 to book.

### Right Hand Turn Signal, Eastern Valley Way

The Progress Association is organising a petition to the Minister for Roads for the installation of a right-hand turn arrow at the intersection of Edinburgh Road and Eastern Valley Way for traffic turning north from Castlecrag. This is a long-standing issue that has been of concern to Castlecrag residents. Come to the August meeting (see page 1) and give your support.

### Trees on Edinburgh Road

In early 2001, the Progress Association approached Willoughby City Council with a proposal to establish an avenue of indigenous trees along Edinburgh Road as a Centenary of Federation project. Council approved the request and drew up a street tree planing program and this was presented at a General Meeting last year.

In order to get the program under way, the Progress Association is looking for street tree care volunteers to water the trees on a regular basis, thereby helping to get them established. Are you able to help? Please contact Kate Westoby on 9958 0215.

### Children's Playground in The Bulwark

Did you know that there is a children's playground in The Bulwark? Well there is! It was created by Willoughby Council in the late 1950s following representation from parents who felt that their young children would benefit if they had easy access to an outdoor recreation area.

The playground is now in a sorry state, but it is hoped that it will soon be upgraded to comply with Council's Open Space Management Plan. The playground area toward the eastern end of the street does not form part of Griffin's integrated system of reserves and walkways and, accordingly, it remains nameless. Do you have a suggestion of a descriptive and felicitous name for this playground?

If so, we would like to hear from you. Please contact the editors or bring your ideas to our August General Meeting. The Progress Association will then contact Council for an Action Plan.

**momo**

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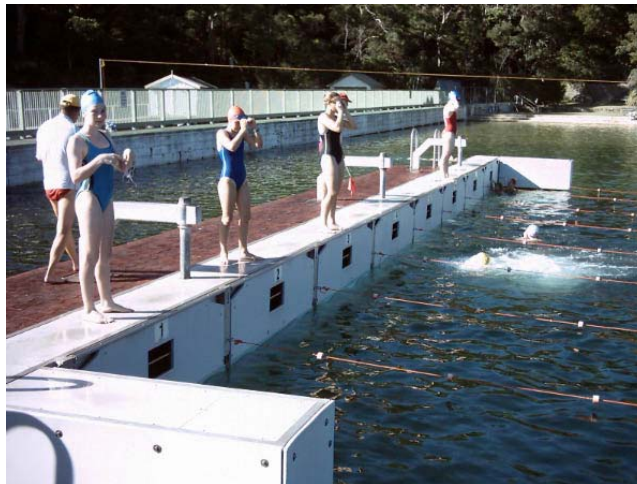
## Northbridge Baths

In the Willoughby Council area there is a sunny, protected and peaceful 50 metre baths and an adjoining diving pool. Many residents may be surprised to learn such a thing exists and may be equally surprised to learn the baths also have a sandy beach and are surrounded by native bush. Northbridge Baths, a tidal baths within Sydney Harbour, has delighted residents and visitors for many years.

Although the baths are in a quiet, protected location in Northbridge, they are not far off the beaten track. To find the baths simply follow the signs from Eastern Valley Way.

There are magnificent views out over Middle Harbour from the elevated boardwalk on the perimeter of the baths. A kiosk is open during the summer months serving coffee, tea and a range of foods that can be enjoyed in the very pleasant BBQ picnic area. Ample change room and toilet facilities and parking for many cars is provided.

Northbridge Amateur Swimming Club has been located at the baths since 1927. Two Olympic swimmers, Jan Andrew and John



Race day at Northbridge baths

Davies were club members and the club continues to be very active. The club's swimming season is in the warmer months from late October to March when there are weekly races each Saturday morning starting at 8am. The race meetings cover a full range of distances and strokes and the races are handicapped. Swimmers of all ages are involved in club races. The swimming club has a genuinely informal and family atmosphere and new swimmers are always

welcome. The atmosphere is such that many club members travel from a long way outside the local area to be in the races on a Saturday.

Free learn to swim and swim correction classes are put on by the Club. For the more hardy, the Club has squad training sessions three mornings a week from 6am to 7am and other events like Friday evening biathlons. The club regularly hosts inter club swimming carnivals. If you are interested in participating in the club's events or have a child who may want to join in, do not hesitate to telephone Brett Batchelor on 9231 5400 or Patrick See on 9221 3200/9967 5221.



### Letter to the Editor: Broadband

Dear Editors,

We are writing to you in response to a letter in your June issue titled: 'Telstra Broadband'. When reading your letter we felt it necessary to respond, for we feel we may have a wonderful and much appreciated solution to the people of Castlecrag. *Unwired Australia* delivers a unique broadband internet service that requires no professional installation, is completely portable within the coverage areas and is competitively priced to ensure there is a plan to suit the budget. Plus, *Unwired* will be available in Castlecrag *this* August.

The benefits of *Unwired* go beyond high speed internet access. It comes with the convenience of being easy to get and easy to use, and offers the WWW Philosophy: "No Wires, No Wait, No Worries."

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We look forward to many in the Castlecrag community joining our service.

*The Unwired Team*

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# Vale: two special Castlecrag Residents

## HUGH BUHRICH

### Exceptional architect

In June of this year Castlecrag lost an exceptionally talented long-term resident when Hugh Buhrich died at the age of 93. Trained in Germany, Hugh arrived in Australia in 1939 with his architect wife Eva after they fled the rise of Nazism.

In the early 1950s they built their first Castlecrag house at 315 Edinburgh Road, in which they raised their twin sons Clive and Neil. Later, between 1968 and 1972 they built their second house at 375 Edinburgh Road in which Hugh lived until his death. Both houses remain in the family. The second house at 375 Edinburgh Road, on the waterfront at the end of the peninsula, is one of Sydney's most significant houses of the Modern period. It is one of the few Modern houses listed by the National Trust and is listed as a heritage item by Willoughby Council.

A more extensive article will appear in a later issue of *The Crag*.

Peter Moffitt

## MILADA GISELA HRONES

### A Holocaust Survivor

Gisa or Giselle as she was often called, was born in 1908 in the town of Moravska Ostrava, Czechoslovakia. She had three older brothers and grew up in a very loving, comfortable Jewish family. Giselle was good at languages and literature and went to Charles University in Prague to study law, graduating in 1934.

She met and married John Hrones in 1935, a Czech Catholic engineer and in 1936 a son Paul was born. Paul was only four years at the outbreak of the Second World War and was taken away to be brought up by the Hrones family as Giselle fled from the Ge-

stapo. She joined the Czech Resistance, to fight for the overthrow of the Nazis. She lived off her wits for the war years and survived by using her intelligence and intuition to stay clear of collaborators. Giselle finally escaped to the mountains and was evacuated from Kosice. Her parents and many of their extended family did not survive the war.

After the Second World War Giselle's negotiation skills were put to the test in a new role of social welfare work and sourcing food for her country. With the rise of Communism and the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, John and Giselle decided to migrate to Australia, mainly for their children to have a good education and future. Arriving in Sydney in June 1949 with Paul and their second child Hannah, the family initially lived in one big room at Darling Point. After a year they moved to Drummoyne, while John, who spoke little English at this time, found work as a draftsman. Giselle worked as a maid and then as an office administrator in the Department of Technical Education. They decided to import heavy German engineering equipment, establishing Fraser Hrones Engineering, which had offices in Crows Nest and storage facilities at Artarmon. Giselle would often work into the early hours of the morning, handling the company's correspondence and paperwork.

In late 1954 the Hrones bought number 1 Sugarloaf Crescent, Castlecrag and in 1962 bought a block of land at 75 Sugarloaf Crescent where they built an architect designed two storey house, featuring a lot of inbuilt wooden furniture. This was their new home to replace the one they had left behind in Czechoslovakia. Giselle continued to live in the house alone after John died in 1992. She continued to proudly drive her car until her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Across this time she attended the Third Age University, continued to keep her mind active with crosswords and collected many new friends. Always friendly

and gracious, she would meet other shoppers or the retailers at Castlecrag or Chatswood and invite them home for a cup of tea. Neighbours and friends were always welcome to drop in for a cup of tea and some home cooked Czech cake.

Giselle was a much loved original resident of Sugarloaf Crescent who valued her family and friends and the environment around her. She actively opposed inappropriate development in her street and around Middle Harbour, composing numerous letters to various authorities. She was a survivor of the Holocaust and in many ways this legacy stayed with her to the end. She was devoted to her family, a loving, caring genuine human being who had strong principles that she lived by and which she appreciated and encouraged in others around her.

Janice Crosswhite

### Melbourne Cup Luncheon

The Progress Association is offering a superb entertainment event on Melbourne Cup Day.

A professionally-choreographed fashion show featuring a collection of top designer labels (supported by local fashion houses) will be accompanied by lunch provided by Castlecrag's wonderful Lunch Restaurant.

'We are expecting over 90 persons to attend this year's luncheon,' said organizer, Gloreen Goldin. She added: 'It will be a wonderful day for the mothers, fathers and friends of Castlecrag.'

This premier calendar event will be held on Tuesday, 2 November. Tickets are afford-ably priced at \$50.00 and are available from Gloreen Goldin 0418 422 998 or 9967 9133.

### Movies at the Haven

As part of the Willoughby Spring Festival, the Haven Amphitheatre will be holding two 'Movie Nights' during September. The events commence at 6.30pm and buses will transport patrons to and from the Amphitheatre from the Castlecrag shops.

**Saturday 11 September:** a family film night with *Babe the Gallant Pig*.

**Saturday 18 September:** The evergreen, *Mary Poppins*.

Information: Howard Rubie on 0418 648 870

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## Willoughby Council Matters



### Water Conscious Living

Workshops on Saturday 21 August and Sunday 17 October, 2-4pm at Warners Park Community Centre, Northbridge.

At this free event, professional staff and industry experts will offer advice on how to save water in and around your home and reduce your water bill. Information on the cycle of stormwater, catchment areas and our current water shortage will be available. Tours of the rainwater tank and stormwater planter box and free starter kit available.

**Booking essential:** Ring Dan Williamson on 9777 7942

### Environment in Focus

An Exhibition of Willoughby Council's Environmental Photography Competition at the Mowbray Park Scout Hall at the end of Ulm Street, Lane Cove North, on 26-29 August from 10am-3pm. Entry is free. Guided bush walks with a professional photographer will be conducted on 22 and 29 August. Bookings essential — contact Dianne Eva on 9777 7755.

### e.restore Levy

During its first three years, the *e.restore* levy raised \$3.3 million. Willoughby Council has extended this environmental program until 2008, with some \$1.744 million expected to be available during this financial year.

Progress information on the many initiatives being undertaken under the program is available on Council's website.

### Willoughby Spring Festival

The 2004 Spring Festival during September features over 40 events, including the Willoughby Art Prize, open studio exhibitions, orchestral and music concerts, and business events and activities that demonstrate the range of cultural and community opportunities available in Willoughby.

Check Council's website for the program: [www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au).

### Market Garden Development

DAs for the Landcom Market Garden development on Eastern Valley Road are on public exhibition at Council until 25 August. The first stage involved the demolition of seven houses and subdivision of the land into 11 super lots, including the construction of five new roads and public open space facilities.

### Retreat Reserve



The magic of Castlecrag's bushland reserves comes alive after rain. While there has been precious little of that commodity this year, Lorraine Cairnes was able to capture some fine images of floods in the Retreat Reserve below The Bulwark after recent rains. This scene shows a swollen rocky creek and ferns below the dominant tree canopy.

Photo: Lorraine Cairnes

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# History of Castlecrag: Part 11

**1974** Local resident and conservationist, Addie Saltis, formed a group to clear 'the massive overgrowth of weeds and building rubble from the Haven Amphitheatre . . . as they worked they also drew in other residents.' These included Beverley Blacklock and Dianne Street.

**1974** On notification from Bruce Ward that he would not seek re-election to Willoughby Council, the Progress Association endorsed John Crew as its candidate for Middle Harbour Ward. John, a prominent TV writer, producer and director, and newspaper executive, had been a resident of Castlecrag for 18 years. He was successful in the election on 21 September.

**1974** A group of Castlecrag residents, co-ordinated by Dianne Street, chairman of the Castlecrag Heritage & Classification Committee, commenced negotiations with the National Trust to have Castlecrag classified as a historical area.

**1976** Restoration of the Haven Amphitheatre was completed with a new stage and changing facilities designed by local architect, Robert Sheldon. A Management Committee was formed and the first production – *Salome*, directed by Howard Rubie with a cast of local residents, and actors from the Artists Group Theatre – was staged. Plays, concerts and recitals have been held in the amphitheatre on a continuing basis for the past 28 years, with the annual 'Carols by Candlelight' a significant community event. Robert Sheldon received a commendation in the 1977 RAlA Merit Awards for Architecture & Civic Design for his role in achieving a notable community amenity.

**1976** The 'Castlecrag Heritage Festival' was held from 3-11 April. It was organised as part of the Australian American Festival of Sydney to celebrate the US Bicentenary by Castlecrag residents with assistance from the National Trust. It featured an exhibition titled 'Walter Burley Griffin and his Castlecrag', and several of the Griffin houses were open for inspection.

**1977** The Castlecrag Conservation Society was established with the objective of preserving and conserving the natural and social environment of the suburb. It had initially been the Conservation Committee of the Progress Association.

**1977** The incoming State Government headed by Neville Wran fulfilled an election pledge by abandoning the Warringah Express-



Yeomen of the Guard production at the Amphitheatre by the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Mosman. Photo: Rita Kaye

way extension to Seaforth and other controversial freeways planned for Sydney. The Government subsequently set up a Commission of Inquiry into the Warringah Transport Corridor headed by Mr DS Kirby.

**1977** Alderman John Crew advised that he would not contest the Council elections. The Progress Association, under president Con Saltis, endorsed Dianne Street as its candidate. Dianne was successful at the election held on 17 September, having campaigned on the theme that Castlecrag should remain a beautiful retreat.

**1977** Architects Kloots and Morgan designed the Babet House at 41 The Scarp. To meet the challenge of the extremely difficult site, they stacked

levels connected by an open stair, with a naturalistic palette of materials and sparing use of colour.

**1978** The revived newsletter of the Progress Association, *The Crag*, issue No.1 was published in March with Bob Ronai as editor. It was a 4-page (foolscap) roneoed stencil production and featured a story by Addie Saltis on the history of the Castlecrag Progress Association.

**Elizabeth Lander, Bob McKillop and James Weirick**

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