

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION INC.

Eighty one years serving the community
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Coming Events

Tuesday 28 February:
CPA General Meeting
(see box)

**Tuesday 21 March; WEPA
AGM** (see box)

1-16 April, Heritage Week
**with theme of industrial
heritage**
(see *NST* for dates)

**April CPA General Meeting
and AGM —
dates to be advised**

*Progress Association
membership renewals for
2006 are now due*

Please see page 6 for
membership renewal form

Future of the Castlecrag Library

The future of the Castlecrag branch of the Willoughby City Library has come under review as plans proceed for a major upgrade of library facilities under the Civic Place project.

As detailed in past issues of *The Crag*, the Castlecrag Community Centre was built during the 1940s through community contributions and funds were also raised to establish a community library at the centre, which opened on 3 November 1951.

At its meeting on 28 November 2005, Council considered a report presenting the recommendations of the Branch Library Study 2005. Council officers recommended closure of the Castlecrag Branch Library and amalgamation with the Northbridge Branch Library at a Council-owned property at Northbridge. Our local Councillors Trevor Morgan and Adrian Cox considered the proposed site was poorly

presented, inadequate to meet the needs of the community and its location in the main street of Northbridge would make access difficult.

Trevor and Adrian argued that it will be a number of years before Civic Place is complete and operational, and in the meantime, branch libraries should not be neglected. Council's library planning adviser confirmed the view that the existing local libraries are inadequate, even at current population levels. Councillors Morgan and Cox consulted with the Castlecrag Progress Association, local groups and long-standing residents on the future of our library facility. Driven by community views, and their own commitment to our area, they were successful in persuading their fellow Councillors to:

- Undertake a feasibility study on the viability of establishing a mobile library coupled with providing a

drop-off point for books ordered prior by phone or 'e' technology. This service is to operate five days a week.

- Existing libraries at Castlecrag and Northbridge are not to be closed until the above is resolved. The community is not to be disadvantaged during implementation of any resolution.

Council is now undertaking a feasibility study for the construction of a new Branch Library and Early Childhood Centre on a Council-owned property at 13 Eastern Valley Way, Northbridge (adjoining the entrance to the Plaza). Construction cost is expected to be about \$2 million. Upon completion, the community library and childhood centre will not only be a leader in our region but Sydney in general.

Cr Johnston has a pecuniary interest in the matter, and did not take part in the discussion or the debate

Cr Trevor Morgan/editors

Willoughby Environmental Protection Association

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday, 21 March 2006**

**8pm, Artarmon Library, Elizabeth
Street**

Alan Tate, former ABC TV environ-
ment journalist, will speak on 'Climate
Change, Sustainability and YOU'

All welcome. For information ring Gay
at 9958 8569

Castlecrag Progress Association

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 28 February 2006

**Castlecrag Community Centre, 8pm
Council Initiatives in 2006 and
Castlecrag**

Our Ward Councillors will be in attendance
and will present information on new
initiatives for 2006 and answer questions

Please park in the street and walk down

The Crag is the community newsletter
of the Castlecrag Progress Association

6/77 Edinburgh Road,
Castlecrag
Web page:
www.castlecrag.org.au

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

Letters to the Editor are welcome.

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Community Bytes

'Cheong House' Sold

The auction of Walter Burley Griffin's *Cheong House* in The Parapet on 19 November 2005 generated 'passion' among admirers of Griffin's work and a price 'above expectations'. The new owner, Robin Phelan, grew up in Castlecrag and appreciates the unique character of the suburb.

Robin said: 'I am drawn to the history of the home, the uniqueness, the challenge of restoring it and the stonework. I like this particular Griffin home because of its simplicity.' Robin has told *The Crag* that she will undertake a thorough assessment of its heritage values and the options for restoration before she tackles the task, but she expects her requirements will be quite different from those that underlie the currently-approved development application for the house.

Sydney Opera Society

This group, which previously met at Nancy Fleming's Castlecrag home, now meets at the Willoughby Presbyterian Church at the corner of High and Laurel Streets at 2pm on the first Saturday of the month. Forthcoming meetings are:

4 March: 'Dusty' lecture by Stuart Maunder

8 April: Recital, Opera Diploma Students, Sydney Conservatory of Music

6 May: Murray Dalum lecture on Delibes and Lakme.

Contact Moffat Oxenbould and Victoria Watson on 9605 5851 for details.

Rose Hazlewood

Well-known Castlecrag identity, Rose Hazlewood, recently suffered an accident on her bicycle that required emergency treatment at hospital. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Willoughby History

The museum of the Willoughby District Historical Society, located at 58 Johnson Street Chatswood, holds an intriguing display of local history items of interest to students, residents and local history buffs of all ages. The museum is open to the public from 1.30-4pm on the 1st Sunday of the month, and from 10am-4pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday. Entry is by donation and groups are welcome.

The Society is seeking new members to assist in maintaining its records, research projects, organising exhibitions and manning the museum. Please contact Mary Thom on 9419 5851 for details.

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President's Musings

Our 80th birthday dinner was a most enjoyable occasion that brought together both older and younger members of our community, including some who no longer reside in Castlecrag but travelled long distances to share the evening. The event prompted fading memories of major milestones in our suburb's history in which the Progress Association played a pivotal role in achieving long-lasting benefits contributing to the special character of Castlecrag we enjoy today. The *piece de resistance* of the evening was an address by Joyce Batterham, one of our oldest residents, who entertained us with recollections of events and the unique community spirit from the earliest days. She also gave us a timely reminder of the need for continued vigilance and activity to achieve and retain those things that are essential to the spirit of the community. Joyce's talk will be available shortly on our website.

I was particularly pleased to see new and 'younger' faces at the dinner and through conversation was reminded of the need to engage newer residents in our activities if we are to continue to maintain and improve the character of Castlecrag. I urge existing members to renew their membership and to continue to engage in our activities. We are keen to see new members serving on the committee and contributing to the growth, vitality and relevance of this Association. Contrary to belief held by some, the Progress Association is not a 'closed shop', so please consider putting yourself forward for election at the Annual General Meeting later in the year.

John Steel

Warners Park Playground

Are you searching for another playground to visit with the children? Make your way to Warners Park, which has recently been refurbished by Willoughby City Council.

The enclosed playground is suitable for young children, though the older ones will be well occupied on the massive climbing frame. A paved bike path for the trikes and bikes with training wheels encircles the sand pit, complete with a water pump, perfect for building dams and rivers. Adults are catered for as well, with two gas barbecues and three covered picnic tables waiting to host the next family outing.



At play in Warners Park

Jennifer Kos

Warners Park is accessible by car through Northbridge by following the signs to The Outpost. For an even more memorable approach, walk down to The Rampart, follow the trail through Keep Reserve and enter the park through the bush. **Jennifer Kos**



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Willoughby City Strategy

The Draft Willoughby City Strategy, which sets out a long-term vision and plan for the future to help guide decision-making and planning for our city for the next 15 years, went on formal public exhibition on 18 January 2006.

Formulation of the strategy involved extensive public consultation during 2005, including community and on-line surveys, a youth outreach survey and forums with the community, business groups, key stakeholders and interest groups, Councillors and Council staff and youth. The City Strategy aims to:

- Identify what the community values about our area;
- Identify important issues and challenges for our future;
- Agree on future directions and long-term goals; and
- Set strategies to achieve these goals.

The Strategy can be accessed on the Council website, at Level 4 of Council's administration building and at local libraries. Submissions currently close on 24 February, although an extension has been sought.

Bob McKillop



Gay Spies has provided this photo of a Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project 1988 community working bee on 'The Plateau' below Sunnyside Crescent. Depicted (left to right) are: Addie Saltis, Christobel Casimir, Dagmar Elias, Sue Randle, Eric Kaye, Nick Hughes, Harold Spies and David Diamond (obscured)

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I wish to comment on and correct the reference to the item regarding WEPA's Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project in the 'History of Castlecrag, Part 14' in *The Crag* No. 156.

The celebration on 20 December 1988 was held to acquit WEPA's \$80,000 Federal Bicentenary Grant, which required, apart from the on-ground work, 'a party, a politician and a plaque'. It was not to mark the track opening as stated. There was no formal Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Track. Our team made its own rough access track and this was upgraded slightly by Council some 10-15 years later, but it is not a formal walking track. Because of the recent management burn below Sunnyside Crescent, this access is now closed off to allow the bush to regenerate.

Gay Spies

President, Willoughby Environmental Protection Association

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Council News

Poetry in the Bush

The annual *Henry Lawson Bush Poetry at Dusk*, now in its eight year, will be held from 6-8pm, Sunday 19 February at the Henry Lawson Cave behind Small Street, Willoughby.

Come and relax with some good old Aussie tea and damper, and enjoy readings of Henry Lawson's poems in the beautiful open-air surrounds of Henry Lawson Cave; the spot where Henry Lawson himself used to come to retreat from society and envisage his poems. Willoughby City Council bushland staff member Don Swonnell and well-known Sydney actor, Peter Carmody, will deliver wonderful poetry readings and tell humorous historical yarns in the ambient Henry Lawson Cave. Dave Seeney, Council bushland staff member, will accompany them on guitar.

'The reading is not only a chance to enjoy poetry and partake in a local history lesson, it is also a chance to appreciate the outstanding bushland of Willoughby', said Mayor Pat Reilly.

Bring along a local bush poem or a creation of your own to share with the audience, a chair or cushion and a mug for tea. Henry Lawson Cave is located behind the Leisure Centre, Small Street, Willoughby. Head to the rear car park and down the bush steps to the bike/walking track.

Surviving the HSC

Willoughby City Library will launch *Surviving the HSC*, a new and exciting student program, in March 2006. The program is the first such program in NSW to have elements delivered in Cantonese and Mandarin and has received a State Library of NSW grant.

Surviving the HSC is designed to support parents, year 11 and year 12 students throughout the HSC and supplement existing school programs with informative and motivating events that include parent information sessions and motivational speakers for students.

A celebrity motivational speaker will be introduced during term three to encourage students to put extra effort into final exams. Seminars include presentations from a wide variety of speakers including current HSC markers for English and career counsellors.

Please contact Willoughby City Library for details: Phone: 9777 7900; email: library@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Samantha Taranto

Haven Amphitheatre



With a 'full house' and standing room only, plus some excellent performances, *Carols at the Haven* on Christmas Eve was a huge success.

One area of disappointment, however, was the failure of many of those attending to use the shuttle buses provided to ferry patrons to The Haven from the shops. A large number of cars attempted to park in the narrow streets around the venue causing considerable congestion and

disruption to local residents. The Committee urges all those attending events at the Haven Amphitheatre to use the bus in future.

An exciting schedule of events is currently being finalised for 2006. Details will appear in the next issue of *The Crag*.

Howard Rubie

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History of Castlecrag Part 15

1990 A community residents action group, **SOS*Crag**, was established to save the Infants School from closure. The community organised a Castlecrag Carnival on 30 April 1989 as part of its effort and some 3000 people attended. Giant 3-metre high puppets of Marion and Walter Griffin were constructed for that performance and to help the community defend itself against those who would steal its school. Following formal closure of the school, a public meeting on 24 January 1990 called on Willoughby Council to support the community in its fight to retain the school, and local residents established a picket line which was to last for four years. The SOS*Crag group commenced its own newsletter and the school buildings were made available for community activities. Mrs Hilda Chapple, who had come to Castlecrag in 1927, became involved in the campaign and expressed her views through *The Crag*. In September 1990, SOS*Crag made a submission for re-opening the school to the Minister for Education.



The SOS Crag rally at Parliament House in May 1989 to save the Castlecrag Infant's School. Photo: Rita Kaye.

1992 A Council sub-committee of local residents prepared a draft **Local Area Traffic Management (LATM)** for Castlecrag. It sought to address community concerns regarding speeding on Edinburgh Road, lack of facilities for walking and cycling, problems of access to the suburb due to traffic congestion and the reduced sense of community arising from car travel and the transfer of business out of the suburb.

1993 The Castlecrag Progress Association played a leading role in reforming the **Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations** to provide a forum where Progress Associations from across the city could discuss issues of common interest. Meetings were held at the Castlecrag Community Centre for several years. Initial concerns centred on the impact of traffic from the Gore Hill Freeway on suburban streets and community opposition to the blanket dual occupancy provisions under SREP12. A delegation from the Federation met with the Minister for Planning, Robert Webster, on 23 September to voice opposition to the SREP12 provisions.

Bob McKillop and James Weirick

1990 *The Griffin*, an Alex Popov-designed house at 8 Rockley Street, won the Robin Boyd Award, the highest national architecture prize for residential work. It was described by the judges as: 'a reverent tribute to Griffin ... but a beautiful and liveable building, which responds to the needs of the client and the constraints of the site.' Other prominent Popov houses are at 171-3 Edinburgh Road and 39 Linden Way.

1991 The Progress Association endorsed Sue Randle as its nominated representative in the Local Government Elections on 14 September. Sue was elected to Middle Harbour Ward and set about her work with enthusiasm. Sue was re-elected in 1995.

1991 The Haven Amphitheatre celebrated the upgrading of the stage with a Community Tea Dance featuring the Willoughby City Brass Band on 1 December. The band and puppets of Walter and Marion Griffin led a parade from the shops to the Amphitheatre.

1992 Castlecrag residents **Max Dupain** (AC, services to photography) and **Leonard Teale** (AO, for performing arts and the community) received Australia Day awards. Both had been active in community affairs. Leonard Teale died of a heart attack while walking in Rockley Street in May 1994. The Leonard Teale Lookout at the end of Rockley Street has been dedicated in his honour.

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