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OUR NEXT MEETING:

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 28 October
7.30pm for 8.00pm

Castlecrag in the new planning era

Guest Speaker: Greg Woodhams, Director Environmental Services, Willoughby City Council

Your chance to engage with Greg and our Ward Councillors in a forum on how the changes in NSW Planning Laws affect our suburb. Refreshments will be served.

Refreshments will be served.

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED to the Community Centre, The Rampart (down laneway near intersection with The Postern).

Castlecrag in the new planning era

Castlecrag residents are cordially invited to attend the Progress Association General Meeting at the Castlecrag Community Centre on Tuesday 28 October to hear Greg Woodhams, Director of Environmental Services at Willoughby Council, discuss how NSW's new planning laws will affect Castlecrag. Following Greg's address there will be a public forum to discuss the issues

and allow you to put questions and specific concerns to Greg and our ward councillors.

You are encouraged to come at 7.30pm for drinks and nibbles before the meeting at 8pm; and then to stay for refreshments and a social chat after the formal meeting from around 9.30 pm. Please come along and join in this important community gathering.

Bruce Wilson

Our new Council



Councillor Trevor Morgan comfortably topped the poll in Sailors Bay Ward and was elected to the No.1 position.

The Crag congratulates Pat Reilly on his reelection as Mayor of Willoughby City and our Councillors in Sailors Bay Ward for the next four years – Trevor Morgan, Adrian Cox and John Hooper. Overall, the makeup of Council will be similar to the previous one, suggesting a vote of confidence in the performance of our Council. Councillors Mary Johnston (Sailors Bay Ward) and Phillip Hickie (Middle Harbour) did not seek reelection, while Cr Tony Mustaca, who stood in Middle Harbour rather than West Ward, and Cr Sylvia Chao in West Ward were not successful at this year's poll.

As indicated in *The Crag* 168 (August), this election saw five groups standing for the

three councillor positions in Sailors Bay Ward. Local Castlecrag resident Brian Moran headed Group E, and while he topped the poll for Castlecrag booth, this was not sufficient. Readers may be interested in a comparison of the first preference votes at the Castlecrag booth compared with the ward-wide figures.

The following table presents the 'Above the Line' vote for each group, plus the 'Below the Line' vote for the lead candidate in the group.

| Group | Castlecrag | | Ward Wide figure | |
|----------------|------------|-----|------------------|------|
| | Votes | % | Votes | % |
| A (Lightfoot) | 75 | 6 | 909 | 14 |
| B (Morgan) | 239 | 19 | 2126 | 32 |
| C (Hooper) | 223 | 18 | 1299 | 19 |
| D (Cox) | 255 | 21 | 1464 | 22 |
| E (Moran) | 345 | 28 | 851 | 12 |
| Formal votes | 1137 | 92 | 6783 | 88.4 |
| Informal Votes | 100 | 8 | 887 | 11.6 |
| TOTAL votes | 1237 | 100 | 7670 | 100 |

It will also be noted that the proportion of informal votes was lower in Castlecrag than the ward-wide figure.

New faces on Council are John Hooper and Rob Wilson (Middle Harbour Ward), who have been active in community affairs for some time. They will be joined by two former councillors in West Ward, Lynne Saville, who topped that poll on The Greens ticket, and Mandy Stevens.

Editors

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the
Castlecrag Progress Association

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag NSW 2068

web page:
www.castlecrag.org.au

emails to the CPA:
info@castlecrag.org.au

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

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Community Bytes

Our Award Winning Florist!

The Crag extends its congratulations to Jodi McGregor and Stu White for their success in becoming the Champion of Champion (Florist) at the 2008 Small Business Awards. The awards, sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank, Certified Practising Accountants, Fairfax Media and Quickbooks, were presented at Star City Casino on 13 September. As the winner for NSW, Jodi McGregor Flowers will represent New South Wales against other state finalists on 1 November 2008. The enterprise also won the 2008 True Local Business Award.

Warners Park Playgroup

As reported in the April issue of *The Crag*, a local playgroup for residents of both Castlecrag and Northbridge operates at the Warners Park Centre at the end of The Outpost. A member of Playgroup NSW, it is managed by a group of volunteer parents and offers weekly play-sessions for children aged 0-5 and their parents. Children can play with new toys, try a craft activity, play music, learn songs, dress-up, play with sand, generally have fun with other children in a safe environment under parental supervision.

The group has vacancies for toddlers and operates on Mondays and Fridays from 10am until midday. Fees are modest, at \$25 per family per term with a yearly membership fee of \$32. Please phone the co-ordinator Donna Morris on 9967-9918 or 0410-689288 for information and come along for a visit.

Operation Caring Christmas

We highlighted the activities of 'Operation Caring Christmas' in *The Crag* No. 166 (February 2008). Under this initiative, volunteers from St James' Anglican Church Castlecrag visit residents who are disabled, elderly, sick or lonely each year at Christmas. They take presents of festive home-made food or flowers and try to bring some happiness to these people. Operation Caring Christmas is a Christian outreach program run by St James, but volunteers visit people regardless of religious affiliation.

The team is now appealing for names and addresses of any residents of Castlecrag or Willoughby who might appreciate such a visit. Contact June Raymond 9958 4739 or Margaret Chambers 9958 4789.

Edinburgh Road traffic matters

Parents of children at the Montessori pre-school on Edinburgh Road concerned about safety in crossing the street at this location have again brought up the issue of traffic calming measures to address this problem. Readers of *The Crag* will be aware that this problem is a long-standing one going back some decades. Council finally responded to these concerns and initiated a Local Area Traffic Management Plan for Edinburgh Road and Sunnyside Crescent in 1999.

As reported in *The Crag* No. 150 (April 2004), funds were approved to construct the traffic calming devices recommended by Council's consultants in 2002-03, but last minute opposition from some residents resulted in cancellation of the scheme and the funds were diverted to projects in other areas of Willoughby. Subsequently a device was installed on the corner near



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Community Bytes cont...

the Montessori pre-school as an ad hoc attempt to keep traffic on the correct side of the road.

Given this history, it is considered unlikely that Council will be in any hurry to start the LATM process for Edinburgh Road over again. If you are concerned about safety issues on Edinburgh Road, however, we suggest you come along to the Progress Association General Meeting on 28 October and put your views to our ward councillors.

The Progress Association has been agitating for a right-hand turn at the traffic lights into Eastern Valley Way since 1981, but all efforts to date have been resisted by the RTA, which holds that the extra phase will hold up arterial traffic to the city and that there have been insufficient serious accidents to warrant a change. Given the reality that environmental challenges mean that the mind-sets of the 20th century need to be cast aside if we are to have a sustainable future, it has been suggested that it may now be an opportune time for another effort. We hope you can come along on 28 October and put your views on how this could effectively be carried out.

CragSitters

As noted in previous issues of The Crag, 'CragSitters' is a local community group that has been set up to provide families with an opportunity to network with each other, and also to provide contact with available babysitters in the area.

New members, both families and babysitters, are welcome to the group. If you're a family who would like to find out more about the group or if you are available to provide babysitting services, please email us on cragsitters@yahoo.com.au.

Sharie Kennedy-Wren

Support your local Community Library CASTLECRAG LIBRARY

Located at the Community Centre, The Rampart (down laneway near The Postern) Phone: 9958 8396

President's musings

Congratulations to our new Sailors Bay Ward Councillors, Adrian Cox, John Hooper and Trevor Morgan. A thank you also to candidates Brian Moran (Castlecrag) and John Lightfoot (Northbridge) for adding such strength and diversity to the field for this ward for the election on 13 September. This community is most fortunate to have been offered such a choice. Indeed across Willoughby City most candidates have nominated solely to serve their community, not with a weather eye to a state or federal political career.

The strong return of Mayor Pat Reilly and most re-nominating Councillors appears to have been an overall vote of confidence in Willoughby's past Councillors and their Civic Place and other deliberations. Hopefully the NSW Planning Minister, now Kristina Keneally, will note the strength of the result and allow Councillors to deliberate on important planning matters. Thanks also to all who attended the 'Meet-The-Candidates' night, to hear the three mayoral candidates and five ward candidates present their policies and answer questions. Castlecrag now has some specific promises made to it that will benefit all here. There was a strong voter turnout and special thanks are extended to our younger voters who showed they value their democratic privileges.

Hugh Mackay at Castlecrag

Some 60 members and visitors attended the Progress Association general meeting on 26 August to hear guest speaker Hugh Mackay and to join him in social get together afterwards.

Hugh commenced with a brief outline of his early life in Castlecrag, noting that his father had been an early member of the Progress Association. He then presented a polished and intriguing summary of the main themes in his recent book Advance Australia Where?

Using the public preoccupation with renovation as an entry point, Hugh argued that has been an escape from engaging with bigger issues. In short, most Australians found the rapid social and technological change of recent time destabilising and even depressing - they

'Crash through or crash' has been a recent trend where some developers have submitted development applications that are gross violations of Council's Planning Instruments. We congratulate Council in upholding its controls despite the legal costs involved. Such 'ambit claims' are a high risk strategy in Castlecrag, wasting valuable energy, considerable time, unavoidable holding costs, and wasting goodwill between neighbours.

Generosity to the wider community is always appreciated, and the donation by the Milston family of their Battlement home contents raised some \$2500 for community activities at the 'garage sale' on 10 August. Neville and Madge Milston are fondly remembered and would be proud of Leah and Michael's donation.

Farewells to friends and neighbours are always hard, but none more so than to David and Joanna Harrop who leave their Sugarloaf Crescent home of 30 years to 'less housework' at nearby Naremburn. We thank them for their contributions to our community and particularly to the Progress Association, where David has been a Committee member for for many years and is currently Vice-President.

Bruce Wilson

reached the point where it all seemed to be 'too much'. The national story was 'let us escape' and individuals focused on what they could control: the colour of the tiles in their bathrooms, cookery and keeping homes 'Spotless'!

Another theme was the changing demographics of our society. People are getting married at a much older age and birth rates are declining. Women of child-bearing age are now much better educated and they have grown up in a rapidly changing society, so they see unpredictability as normal and have little incentive to rush into marriage and a family. Society as a whole is becoming less child-friendly and there are already pressures for child-free leisure and activities all around us.

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Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. Membership Form

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2008

I wish to renew / apply for membership fo the CPA Inc., and enclose payment of: \$ (\$10 per person, \$5 per student)

If you wish to make a donation, this will be most welcome. I enclose my donation of: \$

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Please post to the Treasurer: PO Box 4259 Castlecrag 2068 Queries to: info@castlecrag.org.au

Land & Environment Court judgment on Griffin Conservation Area

In a decision handed down on 4 September 2008, (NSWLEC 1360) the NSW Land & Environment Court agreed with Willoughby City Council's refusal of an application for a new residence in Rockley Street Castlecrag. Council had refused the development application which was to be sited next to the heritage-listed Griffin houses along The Barquette on the grounds that it failed to meet acceptable compliance with a number of statute and development control plan requirements.

The Court held an extended meeting on the site to hear submissions by all parties followed by court submissions on the two following days. It was put to the Court that the height, bulk and scale of the proposed building were excessive in the context of the applicable controls and having regard to the characteristics of the site. As a consequence, the proposed development would have an overbearing presentation to surrounding residential properties and adjoining public reserves, resulting in unacceptable scenic impacts and would block or partially block significant water and other views from those properties.

In his decision, the Commissioner, Mr KG Hoffman, concluded that overall the proposal failed to grasp the true philosophy of the Griffin design principles of the adjoining heritage items and to take appropriate recognition of them. Moreover, it did not comply with the requirements of the applicable statutes and controls for new buildings in the conservation area and as a consequence is an unsuitable design. He also made particular reference to the small houses designed by Walter Burley Griffin which enabled his philosophy of indoor and 'outdoor rooms' and the merging of buildings into the landscape to be achieved on small lots with the preservation of views from the outdoor spaces to the water and bushland distant and near.

He particularly referred to one of the submissions that emphasised that most people who move into the Griffin Conservation Area do so in order to enjoy its unique character.

This case provides an important milestone in establishing the grounds for upholding and preserving the principles of the Griffin Conservation Area as well as complying

with Council's controls. The efforts of Willoughby City Council in establishing the Conservation Area and putting in place the development control plan requirements that preserve its unique character have helped to make all of Castlecrag a special place that bolstered the value of our life styles (and properties).

It is up to the residents of the area to respect and uphold these values for the benefit of future generations. The principles laid down in this Land & Environment Court hearing will help us to do so and those contemplating redevelopment of their dwellings are encouraged to familiarise themselves with Council's controls. The Walter Burley Griffin Society has also produced a brochure called 'The Griffin Legacy: Castlecrag Heritage' which explains the importance and merit of this precinct. This is available from our local real estate agents and the book *Building for Nature: Walter Burley Griffin and Castlecrag* is for sale at Pam's Café. The principles are also set out in the society's website at www.griffinsociety.org.

Editors

Bushcare groups in Castlecrag

Bushcare is a community-based program made up of volunteers who, supported and assisted by Council, help to regenerate and preserve bushland that is owned or managed by Council.

Bushcare volunteers are essential to caring for Castlecrag's bushland. Each Reserve has a specific Action Plan (developed to the objectives in Council's Bushland Management Plan), and Bushcare groups are provided with free direction, training, technical advice, tools, plants, newsletters, celebrations and other support from Council. Volunteers learn new skills, increase their knowledge of the environment, meet their neighbours and make new friends. They are making a real contribution and difference to the health of the local environment.

There is more information on Council's website, and you can call Council's Bushcare Co-Ordinator on 9777 7875 or email bushcare@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

The High Tor, Castlecrag
8.30am - 10.30am
9.00am - 12.00 noon
Contact: Lisa Grant (9958 6591)

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Oriel Reserve, Castlecrag
9.00am - 12.00 noon
Contact: Council (9777 7875)
Cortile Reserve
8.00am - 11.00am
Contact: Sue Burk (9958 4295)

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Keep Reserve, Castlecrag
9.00am - 12.30pm
Contact: Matthew Keighery (9967 2682)
Gargoyle Reserve, Castlecrag
9.00am - 12 noon
Contact: Margaret Hutchinson (9958 4320)

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Casement Reserve, Castlecrag
9.00am - 12.00 noon
Contact: Sue Burk (9958 4295)

FOURTH SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

Rockley St, Castlecrag
9am - 12 noon
Tanya Coates (8907 9204)
Retreat Reserve, Castlecrag
9am - 12.00 noon
Council (9777 7875);
Lorraine Cairnes 9958 1213;
Jill Newton 9967 4933
Cheyne Walk reserve
9am-12 noon
Frances David (Council 9777 7732)

VARIABLE MEETING TIMES

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Harold Smith 1913-2008



This Smith-designed home in Castlecrag has been faithfully restored by its owners. Bob McKillop photo.

Harold Smith, who helped to make Sydney as a Housing Commission architect after World War II and later as a designer of big city buildings, passed away at the age of 95 in July 2008. His early career was here in Castlecrag.

Smith studied architecture at Sydney Technical College and worked with Walter Burley Griffin in his design office before graduating in 1936. Following his marriage to Sophie Linsky in 1936, the young couple went to London where Harold worked with the Australian architect Oscar Bayne, and then moved to New York in 1938.

Following his return to Sydney in the 1940s, Smith designed his first home in Castlecrag for his young family. It was a notable design – the neighbours objected because 'it looked like a dairy', but for years passers-by knocked at the door hoping to see inside. Features that were significant innovations for the time included the cantilevered cupboards in the dining room, a hidden sliding table in the kitchen that sat five and a built-in ironing board. There are four Smith-designed houses in our suburb that make important contributions to the

work by modern Australian architects in Castlecrag.

Professionally, Smith wrote an important booklet, *Planning and the Community*, in 1944 and he was appointed architect-in-charge for a report on the post-war planning of Canberra and Darwin. He established a private practice in 1946 and lectured in town planning at Sydney Technical College. His entry in the competition to design Sydney's opera house was highly commended and in 1972 he wrote *Valid Architecture* on design and aesthetics.

Harold was a keen tennis player, golfer and traveller. As a boy, he had learned the violin, a talent he passed onto his grandchildren, and he was delighted to have inspired a small orchestra of violin, viola, trumpet and piano players. In 1979 Smith built a new family home in Mosman, which became the scene of many extravagant parties attended by a broad range of creative people.

Editors

Based on SMH Obituary,
16 July 2008

Hugh Mackay at Castlecrag

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The children of the future are likely to be burdened by over-zealous parents. Hugh noted that the one-child policy in China led to the 'Little Emperor' phenomena and pondered if we will end up with something very similar here.

During the resources boom Australia entered a 'Dreaming Period' when we just took the money and became 'cocooned' from broader issues. Gradually, however, we began to think a lot more about our values, particularly in terms of balance between our working lives and our private lives. A sudden change became apparent around late 2006, triggered by issues such as the drought and concern about climate change. Once people started to tune in to these issues, they became engaged in a much wider range of matters. Hugh concluded that we are now in a new era where once again people are starting to think that they can make a difference on the big issues, particularly through local action.

A lively discussion then ensued in a Q&A session. Some of the issues raised are summarised below:

1. Is Castlecrag any different from the picture you paint? In terms of demographic figures it is little different, but as a peninsular suburb it has a stronger sense of identity than most other areas – it has the physical characteristics which make a sense of community.
2. Where do you see Australia in 20 years time? Based on clearly established trends, I see a less egalitarian society, but under the influence of the rising generation who are now young adults, I think we will be a more community-orientated and less competitive society.
3. Will this society lead to a new wave of social consciousness in terms of a re-emergence of community groups? It is very hard to judge, but the signs are promising. Today's young people are reluctant to joint organisations like service clubs, but they are prepared to get involved in short-term activities that have a definite result. However, parents are so controlling, it will be difficult for

Continued on page 10



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Bringing the Cheong House back to life



The eastern facade from the Suntrap, leading to the living room and verandah. Photo: Chris Elfes

Castlecrag resident Robin Phelan raised eyebrows when she purchased the Walter Burley Griffin-designed Cheong House at 14 The Parapet at auction on 19 November 2005. At that time the house was widely seen by many as neglected and derelict, but Robin told *The Crag* that she was drawn to the history of the home, its uniqueness and simplicity, the stonework and the challenge of restoring it (*The Crag* 158, February 2006).

Now nearly three years down the track Robin's vision, the efforts of her heritage architect, Scott Robertson, and the

L: Original blueprint drawings by Walter Burley Griffin enabled the window detail to be reinstated; R: Detail of the internal pivot doors which were also restored. Photos: Chris Elfes



dedication and skills of her team of builders led by Graham Fury, are receiving widespread recognition and acclaim. The restoration work on the main house won Willoughby City Council's 2008 Heritage Awards Restoration Category; a National Trust/Energy Award in the category of Conservation Built Heritage; and on 19 July Scott's firm, Robertson & Hindmarsh Architects were successful in winning the prestigious Heritage Architecture Award of the Australian Institute of Architects in the 2008 NSW Chapter Awards, for the conservation of the Cheong House. Consequently the house is currently being assessed for the national Australian Institute of Architects award for heritage conservation of a residence.

The judge's citation at the 2008 NSW Chapter Awards held at the award-winning CarriageWorks Contemporary Arts Centre stated:

The most important aspect of this 1922 dwelling is that, except for the new exterior paint work, you would never know from the public domain that anything had happened. The work of the original architects, Walter and Marion Griffin and Hugh and Eva Buhrich, has been respected in plan

and scale. The house was virtually derelict. Using the repairs and maintenance provisions of the LEP, and with a lot of healthy curiosity from the Walter Burley Griffin Society and Willoughby Council, the house has had significant intervention. Nearly all the elements of the house had failed so it was considered more important to restore Griffin's design intent.

Except for a change in window detail, the significant elements were restored or reconstructed in authentic style. The building has a new roof, new window hoods, new floors, new angled skirting boards, exposed beams to ceilings and much more, but its surviving structure is there, as are all remaining intact elements, such as the remaining kitchen cupboards. The dwelling retains its relationship to the street and the surrounding landscape, being erected adjacent to a Griffin-designed public walkway – an opportunity for the community to enjoy the work of the Griffins in a setting they also designed.

continued on page 7



The southern facade features stone voussoirs as on the eastern facade, whilst the kitchen mirrors the verandah on the north-eastern side of the house. Photo: Chris Elfes

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Looking past the verandah towards the Suntrap, added in the late 1940s, which has views to North Head and the ocean. Photo: Chris Elfes.

The outdoor wing with laundry and a unique suntrap to catch the northern sun, designed by noted architects Hugh and Eva Buhrich and constructed during the austere post-war period, has been restored and extended under a separate project. This adaptive reuse now provides a home office, laundry and bathroom.

Throughout the project, Robin and Scott have kept a detailed photographic record of the work undertaken, as well as pieces of the original structure. Robin says that these form part of the history of the house, ensuring that there is now a complete history of the property.

Bob McKillop

with input from Robin Phelan and Scott Robertson

The road to this achievement has been a long and tortuous one. The initial assessment of the condition of the house revealed that termites had eaten their way through the roof, ceiling timbers and floors; while moisture had rotted the windows and worked its way through the house. A false ceiling installed in the living room in the 1940s had created many of these problems and a builder's report concluded that the only part of the house that could be guaranteed was its sandstone exterior!

The water penetration problems and termite damage necessitated innovative, slow and expensive solutions, but Robin Phelan is delighted with the final result. She pays tribute to the influence of her parents, Bruce and June Walpole, who had built and restored several houses utilising the expertise of architects with sensitivity to the setting and the local environment, and particularly to Bruce's strong belief in utilising what is already there rather than demolishing or throwing it away.



The living room with the restored sandstone fireplace. The 1970's aluminium sliding doors were replaced with a pivot door to match other window detail of the house. The exposed timber ceiling beams were also replaced to original detail. Photo: Chris Elfes



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History Corner – Castlecrag Sports Club is 80!

In Cortile Reserve, between the Parapet and Edinburgh Road there is a quiet reserve with a playground and two tennis courts. It is a beautiful location with lofty gumtrees on the perimeter of the courts; bushes, grass and little traffic noise from Edinburgh Road.

When Walter Burley Griffin planned the subdivision of the Greater Sydney Development Association's (GSDA) land in Castlecrag, he provided land for a school and hospital, together with a tennis court and playground in the Cortelle Reserve (as it was then spelt).

On the 18 June 1928 an agreement was executed between Willoughby Council and three trustees of the Castlecrag Sports Club, David Jenkins, James Cooney and Walter Burley Griffin, whereby the Council agreed to the construction of a court "for the lawful game or sport to wit, lawn tennis". Council advanced £110 to meet the construction costs subject to repayment of £30 plus interest per annum until the loan was repaid. A single loam tennis court was built, lawn tennis being descriptive of the game and the rules that were to be followed. The name Sports Club was thought to be necessary to ensure that other sports could be played in the reserve if so desired.

In 1940, another deed was prepared and agreed between Council and the GSDA, signed by directors Basil Parkinson and Eric M Nicholls. This provided for the building of a rest house, lavatories, seats and tables in the Cortelle Reserve 'of the same or similar design as those erected in the Lane Cove National Park.' It was not until 1956,

however, that a brick clubhouse with basic amenities and toilets was built.

In 1954, with the agreement of Council, a second court was constructed, its surface being stabilised loam (ie loam mixed with cement). This lasted until 1984, when the courts were resurfaced with synthetic grass on top of a cold asphalt base. In 1999 they were resurfaced again in the same way, but this time the wire surround and base was replaced and storm water retention pits built.

From the beginning, Club members maintained the courts and the reserve on a voluntary roster basis, two members at a time, starting before tennis on Sunday mornings, cleaning courts, toilets, clubhouse, stormwater drains and tidying the reserve. For major work, the club stopped playing tennis and had a working bee, building walls, mowing the grass, weeding and pruning bushes and trees.

In the late 80s, the State Government decreed that all reserves should be brought under the direct control of local councils. So in October 1990 a lease was signed with Willoughby Council whereby the maintenance of the Cortile Reserve and structure of the clubhouse became the responsibility of the Council and the club paid an annual rent for the use of the tennis court land and clubhouse but were required to maintain the tennis courts and the inside of the clubhouse.

Currently the Cortile Reserve Bush Care Group, formed and led by Sue Burk, the membership secretary of the tennis club, is restoring Cortile reserve with the assistance

of Willoughby Council. Neighbours and other interested parties are welcome to join in this interesting project on the first Sunday of the month from 8am to 11am.

The Castlecrag Sports Club has about 140 members; some are full members who play on Saturday afternoons, Sunday mornings and Wednesday afternoons, then there are associate members and junior members who make up their own sets and play in the afternoons or mornings when the courts are available. Saturday mornings are set aside for younger player lessons, whether members or not, who are coached professionally by Armond Djani and his team.

Every weekday morning, there are groups of players who hire the courts for a period and make up their own sets. Some of these 'weekday groups' have been playing for decades and have a strong affinity with Castlecrag Sports Club. When these groups are not playing and the courts are not dedicated to the club and junior sessions, the No. 2 court is available to the public, who can book the court on an hourly basis through Pam's Café at \$15 per hour.

If any Castlecrag residents wish to play tennis, experienced players can join as full members but residents of any standard can join as associates and juniors. Details are promulgated on the notice board at the clubhouse and the membership secretary Sue Burk's contact number is 9958 4295.

Peter Davenport
President



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Steve Bartlett: Castlecrag Shipwright for 50 years



Steve Bartlett restoring a timber hulled yacht on the Castlecrag slipway. (Image supplied by Steve)

'The most beautiful outlook in the world' is how retiring shipwright Steve Bartlett describes the slipways and boatshed at Castlecrag. 'Rosella fledglings poking their necks out of dead tree hollows above the slips... the sound of whipbirds and magpies'.

Born in Chatswood in 1943, Steve grew up in the family's Riding School in Fullers Road bushland with the bush, horses and mates to knock about with. At 15 he accidentally broke his Dad's wooden axe-handle, an important tool for providing chicken for dinner. His father responded: 'You are not going back to school. Go out and get a job and earn a quid!' The following week (on 1 September 1958) Steve pedaled his bike to Castlecrag Boatshed and started his life's vocation. There have been five owners of the boatshed since then: Ron Eddies, Harold Last, Mike Vaux, Janet Vaux and current owner Brian Ramsay.

Steve recalls that in the late 1950s there were still squatters on the Middle Harbour foreshores:

"Old Bill and his wife lived on the south-east point, with rusted corrugated iron walls, bag windows and a dirt floor...only the stone foundations remain. To protect local fish stocks, Bill would row out and drop rolled balls of rusty barbwire in the water to deter commercial fishermen trawling their nets in Sailors Bay!"

Steve's first sailing experience was with Peter Sorenson on a Gwen 12 in 1960. Back then all the homes facing south onto Sailors Bay were hidden by the trees he recalls. When Steve's 14-foot VS challenged Mike Vaux's 20ft *Vivacity* one Monday evening after work, little did they know that 'Monday Twilight Racing' would grow over the next 40 years to fleets of 65 boats enjoying the challenges of fluky evening breezes, tide changes and fierce but friendly rivalry.

Steve has fond memories of customers and colleagues; among them Jim Mason who won the Hobart Race in Cadence; Bert Wilson who designed and built four ocean racers; Wally Caville owner of Janzoon on which Steve sailed in two Hobart races; Neville Shead and his sons Peter, Billy and Roger, who gained a reputation for many boats and high-spirited antics.

I asked Steve what have been the biggest changes? "Developments from simple hand tools to sophisticated power tools, and from timber planking and steel to fiberglass and carbon fibre. Yet timber remains my favorite...what a joy it was to recently restore Tony Mackay's 60 foot *Halvorsen Silver Cloud* to its former glory."

And in boats? "We have seen a huge increase in number and size and

sophistication with finger-tip control. It's a shame so many sit as unused status symbols."

And 'boaties'? "Castlecrag Boatshed is one of the few remaining where owners are still allowed to work on their own boats. That's always good to see....it's not just 'instant boating pleasure' on the weekend. The biggest change has been during school holidays. Years ago there would be kids swarming everywhere, rigging their sailing dinghies, taking a picnic lunch (and some fags), throwing bailer buckets of water at each other. They had all they needed to entertain themselves all day: the Bay, the bushland and their mates to muck about with. It was an education in itself!"

Castlecrag's 'boaties' wish Steve a long and happy retirement with Wendy, his wife of 42 years, in the St Ives home they built in 1969. They will enjoy stay-overs by their granddaughter in the same room once shared by daughters Melinda and Vanessa.

Steve added that, most importantly, Sailors Bay and Middle Harbour's waters are much cleaner since the sewerage of the peninsulas in the 1960s and construction of the Northside Storage Tunnel in 1999. He extends thanks to all the workmates who have: "supported me, or should I say, propped me up. I could not have wished for a better place to work." Steve looks forward to meeting up with them and their Castlecrag customers at 'the odd morning cuppa, and Friday night happy hour'.

Bruce Wilson

LILLIES – A Potential Cat-Astrophe

Over the past decade, the veterinary community has become increasingly aware of the association between eating **Easter lily** (*Lilium* sp.) and acute renal failure in cats. The **Japanese, Stargazer and Tiger lily** (all members of genus *Lilium*) and possibly the common **Day lily** (*Hemerocallis dumartieri* and *fulva*) are also regarded as toxic to cats. Ingesting of any part of the plant (including the pollen) can cause clinical signs.

Signs of toxicity in cats may begin within two to four hours of ingestion. Cats generally develop vomiting and depression in the early stages, which may subside by 12 hours; but cats deteriorate rapidly 24-72 hours after exposure. Anorexia and depression continue to develop along with signs of increased drinking and urination. By postponing treatment greater than 18 hours after exposure chronic renal failure and death may ensue.

A veterinarian will make the animal vomit and give activated charcoal to prevent any further absorption. Management of renal failure involves aggressive fluid therapy for at least 48 hours. Prompt, aggressive treatment increases the chances of survival and minimal damage to the kidneys.

Owners are encouraged to research potential toxic plants before bringing it into their home or planting in the yard. It is important to note there are other types of plants which are commonly referred to as lilies (calla lily, peace lily) that are not associated with acute renal failure. These common plant names can create confusion when evaluating and diagnosing the feline patient, and therefore will determine the prognosis.

**For more information
please call VetMed**

9958 0177

**148 Sailors Bay Road
Northbridge**



LETTER to the Editor

Enhancing our 'gateway'

I read with interest the ideas put forward by David Scobie for our 'gateway' and make the following comments:

- While I am very happy to move towards all the items set out by David I would like to see the involvement of a professional (is there such a thing?) 'street architect', the creation of a written (is it?) 'street plan' with concrete examples of all that is now 'fuzzy', and a process of community consultation before going ahead.
- I am uncomfortable with the words 'attractive', 'improved', 'protected', 'increased', 'appropriate', and 'distinctive' as these leave unlimited scope for different interpretation by individual parties.
- While I gather that it has been convenient to create a combined

Northbridge & Castlecrag Chamber of Commerce I see no reason that the Northbridge and Castlecrag 'villages' should be of the same appearance.

While I read that these two shopping areas are to develop 'with their own unique and distinctive character' this may be made more difficult if driven by a combined Chamber of Commerce. Being only a recent resident I have no knowledge how the current look of the Castlecrag shopping centre came about. But, in my opinion, a number of 'mistakes' have been allowed or made to buildings and streetscape that, in the future, I would hope to see avoided and/or corrected.

Neil Glick
The Bulwark

Editors: We understand that it was not David Scobie's intention that the proposal put forward in the article should imply that

the Northbridge and Castlecrag shopping villages should be of similar appearance. David initially prepared the item in the context of Northbridge and the current Plaza MasterPlan process there, while suggesting that the ideas would also be helpful in generating discussion about the potential to improve the appearance of the Castlecrag village. If readers gained the impression that similar treatments were being proposed for each suburb then this reflects sloppy editing on our part!

Neil kindly offered to assist with the process of enhancing our 'gateway' to Castlecrag. We are keen to obtain further feedback on David's original article and ideas from residents regarding the kinds of improvements you would like to see in our shopping village and suggestions about how we can make it happen.



Experience
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
at
The Haven Amphitheatre
Castlecrag
From 28 November through to 7 December 2008

On Sunday 24 September a group of actors under the direction of Bernard Teuben from the Epicentre Theatre Company began rehearsing for the the Haven Amphitheatre's next production of **A Christmas Carol**.

With a cast of thirty characters from Charles Dickens' one volume 1843 publication of *A Christmas Carol*, The Haven will come to life with one of the classic christmas stories of all time. They will all be there – Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Bob Crachit and family, the Ghost of Christmas Past, The Ghost of Christmas Present – in this Neil Bartlet adaptation of this play with music. The story is tightly woven together to create a very moving production with a Christmas ending for the whole family.

Set in a time when Bob Crachits' salary was only fifteen shillings a week, he would have spent his entire week's wages to buy the ingredients for the Christmas feast: seven shillings for the Goose, five for the pudding, and three for the onions, sage and oranges...Times have changed!

**For all information about performances, dates and times visit The Haven website:
www.thehaven.com.au**

And of course as usual our traditional 'Carols by Candlelight' will be on this Christmas Eve.

Hugh Mackay at Castlecrag

Continued from page 5

- children to be allowed to participate freely in such organisations.
4. How does Australia compare with other developed countries in terms of these trends? Almost everything I have been saying about social change in Australia can be replicated in Western Europe and North America. There are a couple of distinctive differences – our high divorce-rate is very new and we also have a resources boom, which makes Australians more complacent about adapting to change.
 5. In Willoughby demographics show a rejuvenation of the population, with a high proportion of the population being under 5. Does this make us an exception to the trends you describe? Willoughby is one of several centres around Australia that exhibit this trend, but overall our demographic trends are the opposite. The change here is good for the neighborhood as children go to schools and engage in sporting activities etc. The shift to private schools, however, works against neighborhood sense of community.

Bob McKillop

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Council News

Civic Place construction

As you will be aware, construction of the new Willoughby Civic Place is well under way. The Turning of the Sod ceremony was held on site on Tuesday 19 August 2008. At this historic event, hundreds of community leaders witnessed Pat Reilly, Mayor of Willoughby, former Prime Minister Bob Hawke, and arts practitioner Renée Goossens turn the first sod of the \$162 million, state-of-the-art arts and cultural centre.



Renée Goossens, Bob Hawke and Pat Reilly tackle the spade work at the Turning of the Sod ceremony for the Civic Place project on 9 August 2008. Photo: WCC

Mayor Pat Reilly said: 'The event will be an important milestone for the entire North Shore community with eight years of planning and community consultation coming to fruition. As well as providing multiple arts venues to the under resourced Sydney arts landscape, a safe community gathering space and a significantly larger library, Civic Place will greatly encourage economic growth for Chatswood and the North Shore.'

Work on the project commenced immediately after the ceremony. Civic Place will provide a suite of arts and educational venues, a safe community gathering, eating and shopping place, a modern and highly sophisticated library, a hotel, serviced apartments and retail space. Funding for the project has come from Willoughby City

Council with support from the Australian Government Water Smart Australia Program, the NSW Government Climate Change Fund and Arts NSW.

The civic site has a long history as a major public place first used by the community in 1903 and has served as a home to the council pound, the Willoughby Town Hall, the Ku-ring-gai Masonic Lodge and most recently the Willoughby Civic Centre and Chatswood library. Willoughby City Library, recognised as the busiest New South Wales with more than 2000 visitors daily, has been relocated to the Mandarin Centre for the duration of the building works.

Council has selected AW Edwards Pty Limited as the contractor for the construction phase of the project and the fixed price contract for \$143 million was signed on 9 July. There are three phases of construction certification by Council: after bulk excavation; on completion to podium level, including the library and car parks; and the main building works. Final completion and commissioning is scheduled for 14 July 2011.

Rebecca Hill

and West Ward News, Issue 2, 2008

Spring Festival: ups and downs

Once again the Willoughby Street Fair, the feature event of the annual Willoughby Spring Fair was cancelled, this year due to rain. It was definitely an indoors day, so a number of visitors took the opportunity to visit the "Meccano Lives On – Toys that made our Future!" display at the Willoughby Museum in Johnson Street. The men responsible for the remarkable models on display may have been in the 'older category' of citizens, but that did not stop youthful visitors joining with them in operating the models and making their own items. A special feature was a display of 'Buzz Meccano' sets, manufactured on Hotham Parade, Artarmon between 1954 and 1977, and models made from these sets. Museum patron Pat Reilly arrived in the afternoon to inspect the displays and draw the raffle.

During Sustainable House Day on Sunday 14 September, a number of private Willoughby homeowners generously opened their doors to share their sustainable living trials and



Fridges must be 250L or more in size and 10 years or more in age. Residents will receive a rebate of \$35 if six stairs or less are involved in removing the fridge. For further information, contact the Waste Projects Officer on 9777 7674.

The ABC's Simon Marnie interviews Gay Spies at the WEPA stall during the Northside Garden Fair on Sunday 28 September.

Photo: Bob McKillop

triumphs in an effort to promote sustainable living and to assist would be converters to achieve success from the outset by talking to those who have already done it. A number of Castlecrag residents also enjoyed the 11th Castle Cove Public School Jazz Fest on 14 September, where they heard the school's award-winning school band perform alongside schools from the surrounding area. Singer Seryna James, The Many Others and Willoughby Mayor Pat Reilly's Rock & Soul City were also in the performance line-up.

The Northbridge Rotary Open Gardens on 20 and 21 September was blessed with fine spring weather. Five gardens in Willoughby, Artarmon and Chatswood were open over the weekend and a free bus tour was provided on the Saturday afternoon. The event provided the opportunity to explore native, formal and cottage gardens and the secrets held within of ordinary peoples garden's. Northbridge Rotary also organised the Northside Garden Fair at Bicentennial Reserve on Sunday 28 September. The event attracted a large number of stalls covering a wide range of garden activities, information initiatives from Council and community groups, and foods and drinks. The live broadcast from the Fair by ABC Local Radio 702 with host Simon Marnie between 10 am and 12 noon was a popular feature. The Castlecrag Progress Association joined fellow members of the Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations to run a stall promoting their activities in Willoughby.

From Council media releases

Fridge Buyback Programme

Old fridges are big energy users, consuming up to three times the energy of new fridges. While a second fridge may seem handy, running it adds an average of \$190 a year to your electricity bill and puts 1 tonne of greenhouse gas into the environment.

Residents who do not need their working second fridge can call **Fridge Buyback** on 1800 708 401 during business hours or visit www.fridgebuyback.com.au to arrange for their fridge to be collected. **Fridge Buyback** is an energy efficiency programme supported by the NSW Government's Climate Change Fund and Willoughby City Council.

Community Notice Board

Community Organisations

Castlecrag Progress Association:

'Representing the Castlecrag Community'

General Meeting: Tuesday 28 October from 7.30pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre, with Greg Woodhams, Council's Environmental Services Director, as guest speaker on the new planning laws and Castlecrag (see page 1). Further information: info@castlecrag.org.au or phone 9958 4516.

Walter Burley Griffin Society:

Annual General Meeting: Sunday 26 October at 2pm, at the Winter House, 34 Adderton Road, Dundas. Designed by Walter Burley Griffin and built for Edward Winter and his family in 1935, the house is beautifully maintained and retains all its original finishes and details. The AGM will be held in the garden and guest speaker, the heritage architect Ian Stapleton, will cover the history of the house and the restoration work undertaken there before a viewing of the house. All welcome, but bring a hat and folding chair or rug to sit on. Please contact the Secretary at info@giffinsociety.org for further information.

The Haven Amphitheatre:

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, 28 November to 7 December – Neil Bartlett's adaptation of this classic play with music for all the family. Details and booking on www.thehaven.com Also **Carols by Candlelight**, Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24 December from 6pm. Note: No parking at the Amphitheatre, so please catch the bus from the shops. See page 10 for further details.

Castlecrag Sustainability Street:

Castlecrag Sustainability Street meets on the third Sunday of every month from 3.30pm to 5.30pm in whichever house is offered for the occasion. Further information: Gay or Harold Spies 9958 8569 or Rob Gibson at WCC 9777 1000.

Castlecrag Conservation Society:

General Meeting Thursday 23 October, 8pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre. 15 former residents will give their recollections of early years in Castlecrag with particular reference to conservation issues. All welcome. The Society's Annual Christmas Social will be held at the Haven Amphitheatre on Sunday 30 November from 10.30am. Information: Harold Spies 9958 8569.

Other Events / Notices

Willoughby District Historical Society Inc:

Thursday 30 October, 15th birthday of the museum at Boronia, 58 Johnson Street Chatswood. The museum is also open on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month 10am-4pm and 1st and 3rd Sunday 1.30-4pm; entry by gold coin donation. For further information phone 9410 3203.

Sydney Opera Society:

Saturday 1 November, Annual General Meeting at 2pm: venue the Presbyterian Church Hall, corner of Laurel and High Streets, Willoughby.

Historic Houses Trust of NSW:

Sydney Open 08 Focus Tour of 20 properties, Sunday 2 November, including the 2007 Scarp House by Kooi-Ying Architects and the 1921 WB Griffin's GSDA No. 1 House in Castlecrag. Bookings essential at www.hht.net.au/ or phone 8239 2211.

Willoughby Charities Day:

Saturday 8 November from 10am at Chatswood Mall. Stalls for local charities and not-for-profit organisations to spread their message and to sell a variety of items to help promote their cause.

*The Community Notice Board is a service by the Castlecrag Progress Association.
Please contact editors@castlecrag.org.au with details of forthcoming events and activities for inclusion.*

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