

“The Pinnacle” Bus Terminus – A Short Story of Community in Castlecrag

Following the opening of the four Griffin-designed shops at the entry to Castlecrag in 1924, a bus service was introduced linking this location with the ferry terminal at Milsons Point by the local private operator the White Transit Company. At the time, private buses had begun to compete directly with the government-run trams that were the backbone of the public transport system for many of Sydney’s suburbs.

The advent of the Great Depression in 1930 brought the competition from private buses to a crisis, resulting in government moves to curtail the private bus industry, commencing with the *Public Transport Act* of 1930. Private buses competing with trams were closed from 1931 and in December 1932 a government-run bus service commenced operations. From late 1938 a geographic three-digit bus route numbering system was introduced, with routes 200-299 being Inner North Shore services. The service to Castlecrag, extended into the City with the opening of the Harbour Bridge in 1932, became Route 203.

At some stage during this period, the Castlecrag bus service to Castlecrag was extended from the shops to the corner of Edinburgh Road and Linden Way near the rocky knoll there. This area was locally known as ‘The Pinnacle’ after a prominent nearby house. The sandstone walls of *The Pinnacle House* had been erected in the 19th Century, possibly as a stable and hay loft. In the early 1920s Walter Burley Griffin extensively modified the original building, adding a high pitched roof finished with his patent Knitlock tiles, with a second storey within the roof. The house was demolished

in the 1950s. The bus terminus remained an open area with a minimum of seating into the 1980s.

In June 1981 Willoughby Municipal Council established the Castlecrag Advisory Committee of eleven local residents to prepare the Castlecrag Local Environment Study. It released a report the following year which was ‘to provide a basis for the preparation of a Local Environmental Plan.’ Among the projects identified was the enhancement of the bus terminus at The Pinnacle.



The Pinnacle House on Edinburgh Road in the 1940s. From the book Castlecrag

Willoughby Council initiated a competition to design a shelter for the terminus. A local architect, Francis Maratea, and Michael Burgess got together “over a few beers” to discuss an approach and, “armed with a ‘sketch’ on the back of a beer coaster”, Francis developed a design that drew on the features of the original *The Pinnacle House*. Submitted in the joint names of



Restored bus shelter at The Pinnacle 2014. Photo: Bob McKillop

Francis Maratea and Mike Burgess, it was selected as the winning design.

The Castlecrag Progress Association initiated fund-raising activities for the project and on 25 May 1986, a large number of residents gathered at the bus terminus for the official opening. Kate Westoby and Kathy Burgess cut the ‘ribbon’ and local children planted out the adjoining garden. The new CPA President, Sue Randle formally thanked the members of the CPA Committee, the children who planted the bus shelter garden and Jenny Kerr, Beverley Blacklock, Joanne Penglase and Tony Taussig for making the morning such a success.

Built in rough hewn timber with a steeply-sloping steel roof, the bus shelter has served its role admirably over the past 28 years. By 2014, however, the shelter was showing signs of decay and Willoughby City Council closed it while an appropriate approach to its restoration was identified. This work has now been completed and The Pinnacle bus shelter is fully restored to its former glory. The Castlecrag Progress Association is organising a formal ‘reopening’ and details of this will be in the next issue of *The Crag*.”

Kate Westoby

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The Haven Amphitheatre

Carols by Candlelight is on!

All are welcome

7:30pm, Wednesday 24th December 2014.

A little less seating available – arrive early!

NO BUSES available this year and no local parking

Details: <http://www.thehaven.biz/running-events/>



is the community newsletter of the Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

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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The Crag is a community newsletter and we welcome letters and contributions from residents about local issues. We do not publish anonymous letters. Items should be sent to the editors by email to: info@castlecrag.org.au

They should be concise (preferably less than 250 words for letters). Please include your email address or phone number as we may need to edit items to fit the space available. Editorial guidelines are on the web page.

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The CPA and *The Crag* is not responsible for information or advice in contributed articles or letters. Readers should seek their own personal, professional advice.

Castlecrag Progress Association news and update

Restoration of the Haven Amphitheatre

The July issue of *The Crag* outlined the status of Willoughby City Council's (WCC) consideration of the Haven Amphitheatre Management Committee's (HAC) proposal for replacement of the stage and undercroft facility. A full Council inspection of the site held on July 26 was well attended despite the wet weather which caused the presentation of community views to be deferred until Council's regular general meeting on July 28.

A large number of community representatives put their views to Council. These included the Castlecrag Progress Association (CPA) which was particularly concerned that a repair option be considered that enabled the Amphitheatre to be brought back into use quickly. Further, CPA proposed more effective community consultation through a Joint Consultative Committee to oversee evaluation of design options for longer-term restoration of the facility. This would foster a consensus of community opinion on acceptable restoration of the stage and associated facilities whilst preserving the heritage values of the site.

Council adopted its functional specification for a new open-air theatre utilising the requirements submitted by HAC, planning and building code requirements, community concerns, the site's natural and physical constraints and residential context, heritage issues, accessibility and material choices. (<http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Council-Meetings/Agendas--Minutes/General-Council-Meetings/2014-07-28/>) This specification will be used to prepare design options to renew / refurbish the Haven Amphitheatre. Councillors also resolved that community consultation on the design options will take place with a subsequent report to Council, detailing proposed costings and results of the community consultation.

Following the Council resolution, Mr Greg Woodhams, Environmental Services Director, outlined steps towards reopening of the amphitheatre this year,

development of design options and a possible DA over the next 12 months.

In summary:

- Engineering advice on the best method to ensure the safety and integrity of the stage to enable the Christmas functions to occur at the Haven and the amphitheatre to continue operating.
- Consultants, with landscape, heritage and architectural skills and input from a theatre expert, to prepare the design options.
- Consultants to inform their work on design options utilising all available information about the Haven Amphitheatre.
- Design options and indicative costs provided for input from the local community organisations, the HAC and interested residents – options will include a more "minimalist" renewal/refurbishment and a more "all encompassing" solution.
- Following community input, consultants will present a preferred option to Council which can then decide the next steps.
- If Council adopts a design option, the HAC will be consulted about its proposals for raising the funds needed to meet the community contribution.
- Once a funding plan is in place then Council can proceed with preparing a DA for public exhibition.

In collaboration with the Castlecrag Conservation Society, Walter Burley Griffin Society and Willoughby Environmental Protection Association, the CPA committee has responded to these proposals with a joint perspective for the restoration of the stage and associated facilities (see page 6).

We have taken a minimalist view in keeping with the bushland and heritage values of the site which complies with both spirit and word of Marion Mahony Griffin's Deed which gifted the foreshore Castlehaven Reserve, including the Haven Amphitheatre site, to Willoughby Council in trust for the community.

This perspective has been submitted to WCC for consideration in the community consultation.

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NEWS from Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney

It has now been seven months since my election as Mayor and the most common question I get asked is "How is it going?". In a word "Busy!"

I am thoroughly enjoying my new role and I am looking forward to the challenges ahead.

The last few months have been a positive period for Council with a focus on planning for the long term. With the recent appointment of Cr Rachel Hill in Sailors Bay Ward, Willoughby Council now has full representation across the wards. I believe the Council is now in a strong position to make strategic decisions for the future and the new team is working well together.

We know that traffic and parking is of great concern for many residents and we are responding by developing a City Parking Strategy that aims to provide effective solutions to manage parking demand across Willoughby and Chatswood. We have recently sought community input on this strategy to allow us to develop the best possible solution.

Council is also working towards a solution to the traffic and safety issues at the Castlecrag Quadrangle at the corner of Edinburgh Rd and Eastern Valley Way. The RMS has proposed to remove parking from outside the shopping centre in order to add in a right hand arrow. While we strongly support the right hand arrow the removal of the car parking will have a negative effect on local businesses. Council has

written to the RMS requesting the right hand turn be introduced in a way that doesn't require the removal of car parking.

New paving has recently been completed at the Quadrangle providing a fresh look and greater accessibility to the area.

Council will also be considering design options for the Haven Amphitheatre stage. Our first priority is to ensure that the amphitheatre stage is secured because of the engineering issues identified. Then we need to enable the Christmas carols to go ahead even though the stage itself will be fenced off. The Haven Amphitheatre Management Committee continues to do an excellent job and Council recently decided to bring the current members of that Committee into a new Committee including the Ward Councillors and inviting additional community members. Once the preliminary work on developing design options for the stage has occurred there will be opportunity for community to give feedback so that Council can decide on the best way to re-open the stage area as soon as possible.

Planning has continued on the Northbridge Plaza Car Park as we work to address the car park's poor condition and access issues. The first stage of community consultation has been completed. Further feedback has been sought and will be used to develop a preferred option for the car park. I am confident that we will be able to find a solution to improve the condition of the car park.

Council received more than 900 submissions during the public exhibition

for the Woolworth supermarket that has been proposed for Smith St, East Chatswood Industrial Area. The feedback received has been considered by Council and Council decided to reject the proposal and recommend to the Minister for Planning that the change in zoning to allow the supermarket not proceed. The decision is ultimately up to the Minister and we hope the Minister will carefully consider the Council and the community's position on the proposal.

General Manager Nick Tobin has recently resigned from Council after 16 years at Willoughby. Nick was such a hard working General Manager who contributed enormously to our City. We are saddened by his departure and wish him well in the future. Arrangements are underway to recruit a new General Manager with a view to commencement early in the New Year.

Apology to Cr. Hill

We sincerely apologise to the recently elected Cr Rachel Hill, as we inadvertently gave her name incorrectly on the caption of her photograph with Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney, on the front page of the previous Crag.

To Contact Your Ward Councillors

Hugh.Eriksson@willoughby.nsw.gov.au
Or phone 0481 033 443

Rachel.Hill@willoughby.nsw.gov.au
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CASTLECRAG NOTES...

Farewell Rosemary

After 33 years in her office in Castlecrag and providing decorating service to all in our area, Rosemary of MOMO has closed down. She will work from home in a more limited way. Thank you for your support of *The Crag*, Rosemary, over many years.

Quadrangle update

The whole of the Quadrangle is looking very smart and clean after the complete painting of its exterior. With refreshed and new planter pots and the new street paving it will be shown to perfection.

KU Castlecrag

KU Castlecrag recently celebrated its 60th Anniversary. KU Castlecrag Preschool provides preschool services for children aged 3 to 5 years old, at the Community centre at 10 the Postern, Castlecrag. We congratulate them on this significant anniversary.

Edinburgh Road / Eastern Valley Way – Right Turn Phase

At its meeting on 11th August 2014, Council carried a motion to provide the RMS with Council's views on the proposal to introduce a right turn phase for Edinburgh Road traffic entering Eastern Valley Way.

RESOLUTION:

1. That the RMS be advised that, while Council supports the installation of the right turn phase, it cannot agree to

the current [RMS] proposal given the negative impacts on the community.

2. That the RMS provides a right turn phase that provides no loss of existing on-street parking because this section of Edinburgh Road is a significant community and retail centre.
3. That after a suitable trial period, the issue of on-street parking be reassessed as part of the ongoing operation of the intersection.

Welcome to "Cruise About"

At the entrance to the Quadrangle a new business has opened, "Cruise About". Call in and see about your next holiday cruise.

Palm Beach Home closes

Palm Beach Home has closed in Castlecrag, but you can still find its merchandise at its other stores at Palm Beach and Surry Hills.

Simon Johnson

A new pop-up shop has appeared in Castlecrag, in the site formerly occupied by Palm Beach Home. Simon Johnson is back for the summer, with his celebrated range of exotic delicacies. Welcome back Simon.

North Shore Business Awards

We note that a number of shops on the north side of Edinburgh Road—Ganache, LJ Hooker and Castlecrag Meats—are winners of Lower North Shore Small Business Awards. Congratulations to all on this great achievement!!

Sugar and Spice closes

Farewell to Jenny and David who have closed 'Sugar and Spice' after four years at The Quadrangle. Apparently, they were unable to convince the centre owners of the need for adjustments to their shop space to reduce costs. We understand this shop will become a cafe and wine bar, which sounds an interesting attraction for the shopping village.

How well do you know your suburb?



Where do these steps lead?

Answer on Page 10. Photo, D. Pope

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The Houses of Castlecrag

An interesting house in The Bulwark is visited by Ben Gerstel. Ben is a local architect and volunteer guide for the Australian Architectural Association (www.architecture.org.au).

8 The Bulwark, Castlecrag

Photo: D. Pope



The house on the battle-axe block at 8 The Bulwark was designed in 1969 for the Gowing family by the late Neville Gruzman, one of Sydney's most notable architects. A spectacular view of this house can be seen from Northbridge Baths from where this white fortress-like building emerges from the rocky landscape. This looks very dynamic at night when the house is lit up. The approach to the house is via a large graveled forecourt with a koi pond. As you pass through the paired front doors you are greeted by brightness as every surface is white. The wide entry hallway is lit from above by a white perspex translucent skylight which runs its whole length. This was designed to be a gallery of art for the original owners. The walls are white and the floor is of white terrazzo tiles. At the end of the hallway the skylight appears to become a window and terrazzo open tread stairs descend to the lower level.

This hallway is the spine of the house with the various spaces of the house branching off. To the left are the living and dining areas, a bar, and the kitchen and laundry spaces. The living room is a very tranquil space with huge walls of glass on each side. These glass walls are so large that they had to be craned in. To the north side of the

living room is a heavily vegetated courtyard and to the south is a large covered terrace (originally open) with extensive views to The Spit and Northbridge.

Downstairs are a large informal living room, bedrooms, a sewing room, study, bathrooms and a small terrace.

The rooms vary in width with the primary spaces – the living, dining and bedroom spaces – being large, while the kitchen, ensuite bathrooms and walk-in wardrobes are long and narrow.

Previously, to contrast with the whiteness of the house, colour was used liberally. There were pink stipple painted ceilings, magenta coloured walls and even a purplish khaki was used. These colours were present when the current owners moved in but it is not known if they were part of Gruzman's original colour scheme.

Many elements of the house have been purpose designed and made especially for it including framing of the glazing, the lighting, and built-in furniture. The windows and doors are framed in stainless steel with purpose designed solid stainless steel handles. Some windows have adjustable external stainless steel louvres.

The windows vary in size, some being placed to frame specific views. Lighting has been designed to be discrete with no obvious light fittings. Instead lights are placed behind white perspex panels which then feature as strips of white light.

The dominant roof of the house is flat with a deep splayed fascia clad in stainless steel. It is supported only by four stainless steel columns.

The architect Neville Gruzman was born in 1925 and died in 2005. In the 1950s he travelled to Europe and Japan and on his return, opened an office shared with architects Ruth and Bill Lucas. He also lectured at the University of New South Wales, and in 1995-96, was the mayor of Woollahra Municipal Council. Other Gruzman-designed houses in this area are his Holland and Goodman houses in Middle Cove.

The Gowing House adds to the wealth of architectural history of Castlecrag.

Ben Gerstel
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Haven Amphitheatre Refurbishment – a Joint Perspective

It has been agreed jointly by the committees of the Castlecrag Progress Association, Castlecrag Conservation Society, Walter Burley Griffin Society and Willoughby Environmental Protection Association that any work done on the Haven stage and its associated facilities should embrace the following elements:

- 1. Minimum Functionality:**
No less functionality than the current stage and undercroft.
- 2. Preserve bushland values:**
Ensure the legacy of the bushland open air theatre endures and is preserved for many generations to come.
- 3. Uphold heritage values:**
Uphold and promote the heritage values of the space, including its natural, cultural, social, historic, aesthetic and rarity significance.
- 4. Touch the earth lightly:**
Adhere to best practice in terms of heritage and sustainability. It should retain and be sympathetic to the bushland, trees, rock outcrops, creek and Griffin heritage of the site.
- 5. Materials:**
Use suitable materials including timber (a low energy, renewable resource), steel, fibreglass and timber composites.
- 6. Stage Footprint:**
Be no bigger than existing stage. The current rectangular protrusion at the

rear of the stage could be rounded off. Easy access to the undercroft area is essential for performers.

- 7. Wet Weather Arrangements:**
Maintain the practice of advertising a wet weather alternative venue or date. It is neither desirable nor practical to hold a performance with the audience sitting in the rain.
- 8. Control Desk:**
The existing two technical desks – one lighting, one sound – are adequate and do not require enlargement or replacement.
- 9. Ticket position:**
The existing table at the top of the stairs in The Barricade meets the needs of a box office and no further upgrade is required.
- 10. Disabled viewing:**
The existing provision for wheelchair bound audience members to sit at top of main stairs in The Barricade is adequate. A clear view is available from here and patrons remain part of the audience. Partly mobile people sometimes find it easier to enter the venue from The Scarp.
- 11. Seating:**
Remain the same as existing. No new seating should be constructed to span across the creek. The tree ferns, currently where new seats are proposed, are an important part of the amphitheatre's amenity and ambience as is the creek that is a particularly

important element and needs to be respected in its natural state.

- 12. Undercroft:**
Should provide (under the stage) the same facilities as presently exists, with a single toilet and kitchen facilities. A lock-up area is required for equipment. An open seating area under the stage area is required for performers. These should be consistent with the limited performance use.
- 13. Plan of Management (POM) for the Haven Amphitheatre:**
Adhere to the 1997 Plan, (<http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/About-Council/Forms-Policies--Publications/Publications/?categoryid=302>) Go to "Parks Plans of Management" then to "Griffin Reserves Plan of Management Part 3 Inventory of Reserves" namely "minimal change to consolidate existing facilities; no increase in site coverage of structures; passive recreation; bushland".
- 14. Deed of Gift:**
Comply with both the spirit and the word of the Deed of Gift. The primary purpose, agreed to by Council, is for the "preservation, maintenance and development of the native flora, fauna, birdlife and natural features ... [that] include soil, stone, rock and water". The secondary purpose is providing for the health and wellbeing of the community.

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Halloween at The Haven



The inaugural "Halloween at the Haven" event was hosted by the Friends of the Haven (FOH) at the Amphitheatre on the evening of Friday 31 October 2014. The FOH is made up of concerned residents who support the replacement of the current Amphitheatre stage with a new stage and undercroft. Although the stage is closed due to structural issues, Council approved holding the event in the non-barricaded area. The evening proved a great reminder to the community of the special nature of our Amphitheatre!

Accolades and appreciation should go to the FOH for initiating this inclusive-community event that included a letter

box drop (and carving of pumpkins...) leading up to the evening. The FOH was greatly assisted in the set up and running of the event by the Haven Amphitheatre Committee.

The balmy evening was complemented by a sausage sizzle (food was kindly donated by IGA, Castlecrag) and a delightful concert performed by local children and adults!

For the 100-strong attendees, all agreed that this should become an annual event in the Amphitheatre calendar. So here's hoping that "Halloween at the Haven" continues for years to come!

Georgina Gosbell & Peta Jesse

Photos:
Georgina Gosbell,
Bruce Wilson,
Jill Newton



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Surviving summer – naturally

Summer is a wonderful time of year. And while it is wonderful to get into the sunshine and seawater, there can be annoyances. Fear not, these can be minimised very easily.

Sunburn

- Firstly, prevention is better than cure. Good sunscreens help. So do shade, hats and shirts; remember that cotton and linen can be cooler than bare skin.
- Secondly, if you do get toasted, there are some really effective remedies. One of the best is high-quality aloe vera gel. This is used to treat burns of all types as well as other skin conditions. The most effective form is 90% or more pure aloe gel, rather than lotions with aloe vera added in small amounts. Aloe is soothing and cooling and promotes healing of the skin.
- Adding a little lavender or tea tree oil to the gel before applying it gives a mild anaesthetic effect as well.
- Surprisingly, applying cold green tea also works to reduce sunburn damage.

Overheating

One of the causes of overheating is dehydration.

- Drinking plenty of water is a fundamental rule here.
- Iced water can cool the body more quickly than water at room temperature.
- Iced tea works well, and is thought to work better when unsweetened.
- Mint is known to have cooling effects. Iced mint tea is delicious, whether garden mint, spearmint or peppermint. Add a twist of lime for extra flavour.
- My friend the acupuncturist swears by this very simple trick: place an ice cube on the crown of the head. If no ice is available, cold water can help. She explains that the acupuncture point there controls body temperature.

Keeping cool

Diet has a large effect on body temperature, both objectively and subjectively. The heating effects of red meat and red wine are well known to science, and traditional herbal medicine recognises that many foods have heating or cooling effects.

Cooling foods:

- Cold food
- Cold drinks
- Chilled white wine

- Raw fruit generally
- Raw vegetables generally
- Yoghurt
- Fish
- Chilli
- Stir-fries

Very cooling foods:

- Iced drinks
- Iced foods
- Cucumber
- Daikon (long white radish)
- Melons
- Sashimi (raw fish)

Warming and heating foods to reduce in very hot weather:

- Red meat
- Spices (except chilli)
- Red wine
- Cocoa and chocolate
- Coffee
- Baked or roasted food
- Deep-fried food
- Slow-cooked stews and curries

Ruth Kendon

The Haven Natural Therapies

Bringing Light to Fiji Villages



Hand-held solar-charged lights are bringing new light to remote villages in Fiji which have little or no electricity. David Robertson, a Northbridge Rotary Club member and Castlecrag resident with a history of helping

villagers in remote parts of Fiji, recognised that these inexpensive lights would change the lives of many people.

David's main target audience was village children. "Many school children travel hours each day to and from school, often in the dark", David said. "The lights are used by children in their classrooms and to do their homework at night in huts with no electricity".

David said the lights are also useful for chores such as cooking inside a dark hut, especially during the monsoon season, and for avoiding accidents and injuries when walking at night.

On a recent visit to Fiji, David took with him 240 lights purchased by Rotary Club

of Northbridge at a total cost including freight of almost \$3000. The lights were distributed by David to two village schools.

"It was a joy to see the people in the villages welcome light to their homes and schools", David said. "Most of the villages have only one central generator of electricity and often it is not working because of cost or breakdown. These lights are such a simple and effective solution to so many of their inconveniences."

The Northbridge club had the support of the Rotary Club of Suva in Fiji for the project.

For further information, contact David Robertson 0458 581 485 or Malcolm Lye 9958 7566.



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Keeping the books: 66 years of community library service

Castlecrag Community Library is commencing its 66th year of operation in 2014. While it may not be the oldest public library service in the State, it is possibly the longest running service staffed by volunteers, a testament to the enduring Castlecrag civic spirit.

Moreover, the residents who initiated the library for Castlecrag wanted others to enjoy the benefits of free access to books. Their active endorsement of the Free Library movement encouraged Willoughby Council and other local councils to implement the Library Act of 1939 and fund local public libraries.

The genesis of the Castlecrag Community Library was with the allocation of public land in The Rampart for community purposes in the original Walter Burley Griffin planning. In 1944 the Castlecrag and East Willoughby Community Advancement Co-operative Society Ltd was formed to administer a pre-school and raise money for a Castlecrag Community Centre on this land and Willoughby Council transferred the allocated public land to the Co-operative. The Society raised £1000 which was matched by the Council. Local resident Eric Nicholls, Walter Burley Griffin's architectural partner, donated his service to design the building and residents did much of the labouring work.

By 1947 another Castlecrag community group, the Community Circle, had begun to discuss the establishment of a community library and formed the Castlecrag Library Committee in October 1947.

In 1948 the Committee received permission from the Co-operative (which controlled the Community Centre) to store and issue books from a portion of the washroom at the Centre.

The library collection consisted of donated materials and new books purchased with donated monies and £50 'seed' funding from Council. One of the Committee members, Bim Hilder, constructed the bookshelves.

At the time, Mr Clive Reid, the local alderman, "stressed the great admiration of the Council for the work accomplished by the citizens of Castlecrag, who themselves work before asking for money from Council."

The fledgling Castlecrag Library Committee enlisted the support of Ron McGreal of the NSW Library Board. He assisted with the selection and classification of books as well as actively assisting with the lobbying of Council.

While the humble washroom facility at the Community Centre offered a starting point for the new Library, the Committee was keen for more suitable accommodation to be created.

In November 1948 the Committee resolved to enlist the support of other



Construction of Castlecrag Community Centre, 1947. Names on back of photograph: Bruce Dixon, Cecily Adams and Berry, Gillian Adams, Duncan (foreground) Sorenson.

Photo: Picture Willoughby©



Community Centre official opening 29th November 1947.

Photo: Picture Willoughby©

various community groups including the Community Circle, the Progress Association, the Teen-Age Club and the Bridge Club to recommend "the Co-operative Society immediately implement its plans for adding a library wing to the present building."

Meanwhile, the size of the collection was increasing, through purchase and donation, often solicited by Committee members. Minutes from the Committee meeting of May 1949 note: "Mrs. Straton reported talking to Mr. Nicholls re books belonging to Mr. & Mrs. Griffin which might be available. Mrs. Deans to see Mrs. Sawyer re books. Mrs. Walker to donate books on dressmaking: Mr. Moriarty has donated book on aborigines. Mr. Griffin to supply list of books on spinning, weaving, interior decoration and radio. Mr. & Mrs. Hilder to suggest books on art. Mrs. Brereton and Mr. Constable to be asked to supply suggestions of books on the theatre."

By June 1949 all the Committee's hard work paid off and the Council approved a grant and loan for the construction of another room at the Community Centre to house a library and meeting rooms. A community dance was held in October to celebrate with 125 people attending and £26.6.0 raised towards more books. Library dances became a regular part of the social calendar of Castlecrag.

As the new wing took shape the Committee began to consider how it would run and noted: "a large number

of volunteer librarians will be needed. Suggested that kindergarten mothers be approached asking them to help by supplying a panel of librarians particularly for duty during special children's afternoons. Also suggested that Committee members nominate library helpers to be on a roster once a fortnight."

The Castlecrag Community Library, housed in a new wing at the Community Centre, opened on 3 November 1951. It was staffed by a group of volunteers sourced from the kindergarten, the Teen-Age Club Adult Committee and the Play Centre all given some basic training by a qualified librarian, Mr Southwell.

While all of this activity was occurring with the Castlecrag Library, the Castlecrag Library Committee was also greatly involved in promoting the cause of public libraries on the bigger stage. Members attended a number of local government conferences and forums urging local councils in the north shore area to implement the Library Act and establish local libraries.

Interestingly other community-based volunteer libraries existed within Willoughby Council area in the 1940s and 50s: Artarmon Auxilliary of Children's Library Movement, Northbridge Youth Library Movement, Chatswood Boys and Girls Library. All of these libraries and the Castlecrag Community Library attracted some funding from Willoughby Council – for example in 1955 Council voted the Castlecrag Library:

£150 salary for a part time librarian

£20 for book repairs and binding

£100 for purchase of books

£35 general expenses.

The Castlecrag Community Library has truly been a grassroots organisation from its conception, with hundreds of Castlecrag residents contributing in various ways over the past 66 years. It would be impossible to list all, but special mention should go to the founding Library Committee of 1947: Mrs James Straton, Mrs Brett Hilder, Mrs Edgar Deans, Mr and Mrs George Walker and Mr Bim Hilder; joined in 1948 by Mr James Ward, Mrs Bim Hilder, Mr Basil Griffin, Mr Michael Stoker and Mr Clive Reid. It was the drive and vision of these residents that made a library for Castlecrag a reality.

Today the tradition of community service continues with the dedicated band of volunteers who staff the Castlecrag Library at The Rampart on:

Tuesdays 3.00 to 4.30pm,

Thursdays 2.00 to 5.00pm and

Saturdays 10.00 to 12.00 noon.

Contact the Library on 9958 8395.

Compiled by Local Studies Department, Willoughby City Library.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS • environment news • ENVIRONMENT NEWS



Swamp Wallaby near Sugarloaf Bay.
Photo by Niall Ferguson

Wallaby sighting

On 30 Oct 2014, at 12:44 pm, Sarah Harrison emailed info@castlecrag.org.au:

Just seen one in the bush at the back of our house, 90 Sugarloaf Crescent! Not sure if anyone wants this info for wildlife/conservation reasons but so excited, had to pass it on!!

Gay Spies replied:

That's great news Sarah. We live at 66 and we see and more often hear them most evenings. They are also enjoying eating many of our plants, about which we are less than overjoyed.

Red-crowned Toadlet

This curious little frog was sighted in Retreat Reserve recently. This species is a close relative of the famous yellow and black "Corroboree Frog" of Kosciuszko, and is also colourful, with a red triangle on its head and a red stripe on its body. It crawls rather than hops, and is found only in Hawkesbury Sandstone areas around the Sydney Basin.

Eggs are laid in moist leaf litter, from where they are washed by heavy rain; a large proportion of the development of the tadpoles takes place in the egg. Breeding congregations occur in dense vegetation and debris beside ephemeral creeks and gutters. Red-crowned Toadlets have not been recorded breeding in waters that are even mildly polluted or with a pH outside the range 5.5 to 6.5.

The NSW Scientific Committee has listed it as "Vulnerable". Threats include:

- Clearing of habitat, particularly along ridges;
- Reduction in water quality flowing from ridges, particularly near urban areas;
- High frequency fire, resulting in changing vegetation structure and

composition;

- Collection of bush rock;
- Disease (chytrid fungus);
- Climate change.

Red-crowned Toadlets are quite a localised species that appear to be largely restricted to the immediate vicinity of suitable breeding habitat. Discrete populations concentrate at particular sites, and a relatively small localised disturbance may have a significant impact on a local population if it occurs on a favoured breeding or refuge site.

If you spot one, please leave its habitat undisturbed, and let Willoughby Council's Wildlife Officers know about your exciting discovery.

Northbridge Golf Club committed to saving the environment

Some years ago, the Northbridge Golf Club committed to help the environment by installing a "Domus" worm farm on its golf course to treat the waste from the halfway toilets. This has worked extremely well.

In 2007-2008, the Club embarked on a very ambitious stormwater harvesting project to become self-sufficient for irrigation purposes, and thus significantly reduce use of town water. The project involved building a main storage dam with three transfer/feeder dams. By harvesting runoff from surrounding streets and Northbridge Oval, the Club now saves up to 60 million litres of town water per annum. The substantial investment of over \$1.5m will be well justified by future savings on town water. The transformation of the golf course has been nothing short of dramatic following the augmented supply of water.

The Club's most recent environmental undertaking is the large rooftop solar panel installation to harvest this renewable energy source and reduce reliance on the electricity grid, along with the obvious environmental benefits. It is expected that the upfront costs will be recouped over the initial years, with substantial savings in future years, and a significant reduction in our carbon footprint. This installation follows the 2013 changeover of all internal lighting in the Club to LED bulbs.

On the golf course itself we are currently restoring native habitat in a large area between the 4th and 10th holes. Non-native plants and noxious weeds have been removed to be replaced with crushed sandstone from the area together with native plantings to follow. This project forms part of the Club's commitment to bushland management and its long term

aim of returning areas of Northbridge Park to their former glory.

As demonstrated above, the Club has a strong commitment to the environment - something that will be ongoing.

Marko Delatovic
General Manager
Northbridge Golf Club

10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code – outcomes

There have been many reports of inappropriate tree removal, particularly on the Northern Beaches, in the northern suburbs and on the lower North Shore. At a recent packed public meeting in Pennant Hills, organised by Hornsby Council, there were many horror stories of tree loss. The overwhelming outcome of the 10/50 Code is its abuse, to obtain views, to allow development, to remove trees which councils had previously refused permission to remove.

Residents have asked owners why they have had trees removed. Answers range from 'don't like trees', 'it might fall on the dog', 'leaves get in the bird bath', 'leaves collect on the lawn', 'because I can'. A minuscule number cite bush fire safety.

In Willoughby, trees have been removed in all suburbs, although the worst affected area is West Chatswood. Almost none have been removed because of bushfire concerns. Magnificent angophoras on the foreshore at Castlecrag have been felled - against the possibility of water borne fire?

The Rural Fire Service (RFS) presenter at the Pennant Hills meeting confirmed that there is no increased risk of fire in suburban areas to warrant current activity. Clearly, 10/50 is a political knee-jerk reaction to the 2013 Blue Mountains fires. It has no scientific basis, is fundamentally flawed and will not reduce bushfire risk.

A moratorium is needed immediately while the review is completed (who knows how long this will take and how many trees will be lost). The legislation should be repealed.

How you can help: Write a short email asking for an immediate Moratorium to Minister for Emergency Services, Stuart Ayres, office@ayres.minister.nsw.gov.au and to our local member, Gladys Berejiklian, willoughby@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

Gay Spies

How well do you know your suburb?

These stone stairs connect The Bulwark to The Scarp and lead to the Haven Amphitheatre.

Volunteer Site Monitors Needed

Are you interested in outdoor volunteer work that helps to protect the Aboriginal heritage sites in your local area?

Want to learn more about the heritage and history of northern Sydney?

The Aboriginal Heritage Office is starting a new round of volunteer training that is right up your alley.

What is the Aboriginal Heritage Office?

The Aboriginal Heritage Office is a joint initiative by the Councils of Ryde, Kuring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Warringah and Willoughby in a progressive move to protect Aboriginal Heritage in these areas.

There are over 1000 Aboriginal heritage sites in Northern Sydney. This wealth of history provides us with one of the very few links that we have to this area's indigenous past. Part of the work of the Aboriginal Heritage Office is to monitor, record and protect these site as well as educating our community and younger generation in the importance of indigenous heritage protection.

What is a Volunteer Site Monitor?

Becoming a Volunteer Site Monitor is a

great way to learn about how Aboriginal people would have lived in this area. Volunteers are allocated a heritage site that they then monitor for any change, damage or potential harm.

Sites are allocated to suit individual's location, fitness and transport arrangements. Volunteers can monitor their allocated site at anytime that suits them and there is no minimum requirement for the number of visits (although we do aim to have sites monitored at least every six months).

Participants of all professions, fitness levels and background knowledge are welcome.

How do I become a Volunteer Site Monitor?

Easy!

Find the contact details at:

www.aboriginalheritage.org

Call the office on 9936 8263

Or email the AHO at:

info@aboriginalheritage.org

New volunteers attend a short, two hour training session which gives an interesting insight into the history and heritage of northern Sydney as well as providing information about how to carry out the role of a Volunteer Site Monitor.

Thank You Deidre and Lorraine

Deirdre Pope has been the Editor of *The Crag* for the past 3 years, ably supported by Assistant Editor Lorraine Cairnes.

Both editors have recently stepped down from their roles.

De and Lorraine, the Castlecrag Progress Association is most grateful for the enthusiastic dedication, hard work and time you have devoted to maintaining the quality and relevance of our newsletter.

You will both be hard acts to follow and we thank you very, very much.

EDITOR REQUIRED

We are seeking a new (honorary) Editor for *The Crag*, our local community newsletter published by the Castlecrag Progress Association (CPA), to commence in January 2015.

The Crag is published 3-4 times per year and you will be responsible for sourcing and editing items as well as liaising with the writers, local advertisers, and the President of the CPA.

The editorial guidelines are available on our website at www.castlecrag.org.au.

Please contact the Secretary, CPA, on info@castlecrag.org.au to discuss the role, or to find out more.

Book Review

The Truckie Who Loved Trains: the biography of Ken Thomas

by David Wilcox.

Self published, 2012

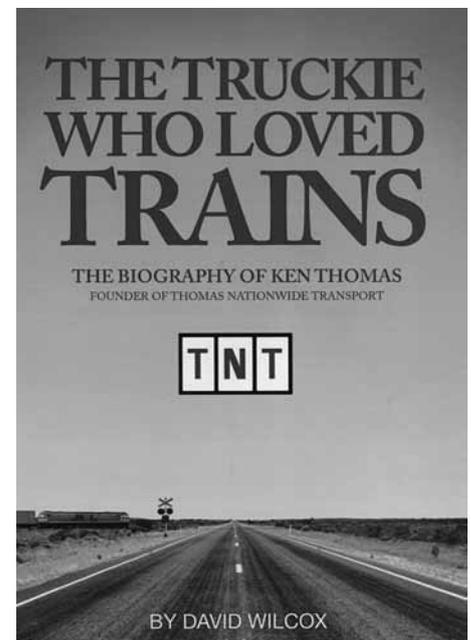
Many Castlecrag residents will be aware that Ken and Anne Thomas were prominent members of our local community and three of their children – Elizabeth, Megan and Gavin – have played prominent roles in our local organisations, including the Progress Association. Some will also be aware that Ken was the founder of a one-man trucking enterprise that expanded into Australia's largest transport operation, Thomas Nationwide Transport (TNT) which would ultimately become a global logistics corporation.

Now David Wilcox, who worked in the transport industry and had a family connection to Anne Thomas, has brought the story of Ken's remarkable life together in this highly readable and entertaining biography. Ken was born at the railway town of Harden on 15 June 1913 to the railwayman Arthur ('Gart') Thomas and his wife Elizabeth and spent his first 11 years in that town. These formative years gave him an understanding of people and a respect for the railways as a key mode of transport.

After his education in Sydney and World War II, Ken Thomas followed many other young men in purchasing a truck to try his hand in the transport business, but unlike most of them, his interest was in organising others to drive it while he concentrated on marketing strategies and improving management systems. Soon he was trading under the name KW Thomas Transport with a fleet of trucks, competent lieutenants on his management team and a transport depot at Balmain, while his growing family was established in their Castlecrag home.

By 1951, Ken Thomas was a leading figure in Australia's transport industry using the railways to develop more efficient transport services. He launched his Bulk Loading scheme whereby his company hired wagons from the NSW railways to transport its goods between Sydney and Melbourne at an agreed rate per ton.

By June 1958 KW Thomas Transport, then Australia's largest interstate transport operator, changed its name to Thomas National Transport and soon the famous



TNT logo adorned its trucks and containers. When TNT was floated as a public company, Commonwealth authorities would not register its formal name, so it became Thomas Nationwide Transport.

The Truckie Who Loved Trains sells for \$35 and is available at Castlecrag Post & News. Copies are also available from the author: dawwilcox@bigpond.com.

Bob McKillop

Diary Dates • Diary Dates • Diary Dates

- **Saturday, 6 December 2014 4:00pm – 8:30pm**

Carols in Willoughby Park

A family-friendly event featuring Willoughby Symphony Choir and Willoughby Band performing all your favourite carols, with a surprise visit from a special Christmas guest!

Address: Willoughby Park,
Cnr McClelland Street and Warrane Avenue, Willoughby
Cost: Free

- **Friday 9 January – Monday 26 January 2015**

The Chatswood Family Festival

A new festival incorporating both paid and free children's events and activities.

Includes premium children's theatre performances at The Concourse including ABC4Kids Giggle and Hoot, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat and Willoughby Symphony's Baby Proms.

Outdoor events include a series of free outdoor family films screening on the Urban Screen on The Concourse, an outdoor Family Retreat on The Concourse, story readings and children's craft hosted by Chatswood Library, and The Young Creators exhibition.

Address: The Concourse, 409 Victoria Avenue, Chatswood
Cost: Free / various costs
Contact: Catherine Franklin on 9777 7974
or email catherine.franklin@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

- **Wednesday, 14 January 2015 11:00am to Saturday, 31 January 2015 4:00pm**

The Young Creators

An exhibition and workshop program designed to engage, entertain and creatively inspire under-18s. A select group of young people from years 10–12 will curate an exhibition of artworks by renowned artists,

Michelle Cawthorne and TianLi Zu. Also, children and teens can attend a range of related art workshops conducted by Michelle, Tian and other artists, where they will create an artwork which may be selected for inclusion in the exhibition

Address: Art Space on The Concourse, Victoria Avenue, Chatswood
Cost: Free
Contact: Kathie Najar on 0401 638501
or email kathie.najar@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

OTHER NOTICES

Castlecrag Bushcare Groups' Meeting Dates:

First Sunday of the month

- Cortile Reserve; 8am–11am; contact Sue Burk 9958 4295
- Northern Escarpment; 9am–12noon; contact Richard Blacklock 0417 217 937

Second Saturday of the month

- Gargoyle Reserve; 9am–12noon; contact Margaret Hutchinson 9958 4230

Second Sunday of the month

- Keep Reserve; 9am–12.30pm; contact Matthew Keighery 9967 2682
- Retreat Reserve; 9am–12noon; contact Lorraine Cairnes 9958 1213 or Jill Newton 9967 4933

Third Saturday of the month

- Torquay Estate Reserve; 1pm–3pm; contact Jo Nolan 9958 8237

Third Sunday of the month

- Beverley Blacklock Reserve/Cheyne Walk, 9am–12 noon, contact Frances Davis at WCC 9777 1000
- Casement Reserve; 9am–12noon; contact Sue Burk 9958 4295
- Oriel Reserve; 9am–12noon; contact Mandy Wilson 9777 7875 or Rob Gibson 0409 035 614

Diary Dates is a service by the Castlecrag Progress Association.
Please contact: info@castlecrag.org.au with details of forthcoming events and activities for inclusion.



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