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HISTORY OF CASTLECRAG -- JAMES HARRIS FRENCH

Addie Saltis

James 'Darby' French was granted several parcels of land in our neighbourhood: Most of 1st and 2nd Avenues; what is now Clive Park in Northbridge and 44 acres on the eastern side of Alpha Road which included the present Sydney Grammar School Sports field. This latter estate was known locally as French's Garden and James lived here in a house called "Paradise" until his death in 1893.

James French was born in England in 1817 and came to farm in Australia in 1841. In 1851 he was appointed a Special Constable and Ranger of Crown Lands.

He married Mary Tiffin (formerly Blue) daughter of 'Billy' Blue, the first ferryman from Sydney Town to the North Shore.

In time he developed a timber industry, at Frenchs Forest. His 200 acres of timber were near the present Arndale Shopping Centre with two saw-mills on what is now the Drive-In Theatre. Timber was hauled to Bantry Bay for shipment.

French was one of the signatories of the petition for the incorporation of the Willoughby Municipality. The first Council election was held in a house on his property. He was elected to the first Council and also stood for Mayor twice -- unsuccessfully.

James French was buried at the Wesleyan Cemetery, corner of Lane Cove Road and Mowbray Road. His headstone has since been removed and placed in a wall of the Assembly Hall at Forest High School.

Please tear this form off here and send with your membership payment, to Castlecrag Progress Association, c/- 60 The Bulwark, Castlecrag 2068, or bring to A.G.M.

I WISH TO RENEW/APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION, AND

ENCLOSE MY PAYMENT FOR:

\$4 membership + donation of \$6,	total \$4	<i>please tick</i>
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(Please note: While membership has been set at \$4 per household, any extra donation you might be generous to offer would be very gratefully received, and assist the Castlecrag Progress Association in its work.)



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

— Gavin Thomas

The Community Dance held in December was a great success. The Larrikin's Bush Band provided the entertainment and it was good to see both children and adults enjoying themselves, often to the extent that there was a queue to get onto the dance floor.

The re-instigation of a Community Dance is hoped to be a regular event, offering the residents of Castlecrag the chance to meet everyone socially.

The night would not have been the success it was without the magnificent help of the Castlecrag Progress Association's Fund-Raising Committee and its numerous helpers. Marcella Stephens and Anne Korner are to be especially thanked for their efforts.

During the year the main activity for the Progress Association has been the Expressway Corridor submission. The hearing has been postponed yet again, to 1982 when it is hoped we will finally know the outcome of our Association's long and difficult fight against the expressway.

The Progress Association also commissioned the Total Environment Centre to provide an independent submission. This in-depth report has been received and fully agrees with our viewpoint. Again, the fight against the expressway has required considerable funds, but due to a lot of hard work all outstanding debts have now been paid.

One item which keeps on being raised by many members is the apparent lack of concern for our suburb and its beautiful bushland setting. This includes care and maintenance for our own yards but in addition a little civic pride in the care for our reserves and "bush islands" by everyone. If we don't care and have the attitude of leaving it to Council, we deserve what we get -- unconcerned workers doing a basic job. Most people moved to Castlecrag for its beautiful bushland setting close to the city, so lets try and keep it that way instead of degenerating into just another suburb.

A reminder that our Annual General Meeting is being held on Tuesday 23rd February, 1982, and everyone is welcome to attend.

R.W'S MENSWEAR

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ALDERMAN'S REPORT -- OUR COUNCIL RATES

Ald. Eric Kaye (95 6146)

A leading article in a Sunday Newspaper on January 24 stated that Willoughby Council intended to increase rates in Castlecrag by 90% this year. The report is nonsense. However, so many people have expressed concern to me that I feel I should attempt to set the record straight.

The facts are that the overall increase in rates for the Municipality is less than 14%. However, because of recent revaluations by the Valuer-General's Department, some rates will increase more than this and consequently others will be less. In the case of Castlecrag and Castle Cove, where recent valuations were steeply increased, some residents will pay up to 30% more than last year.

In an effort to equitably distribute the burden, Council adopts a differential rating system, whereby residential properties pay far less than comparable commercial properties.

Quite a few people have asked me how the rates are determined by Council. The following may be of interest...

The rate is struck after Council has estimated its expenditure for the coming year. The various items included in the estimates are most carefully studied by the Council in an effort to provide the Municipality with all the necessary facilities and services required, such as roads, health, planning, libraries, community services, etc., and at the same time keep the rates at a reasonable level, since rates account for the most of Council's income.

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ALDERMAN'S REPORT, CONTINUED....

The estimated expenditure for 1982 was set at \$15.7 million. From this must be deducted all income other than rates, the balance then is the amount to be raised by rates. The other component in the equation is the valuations of our properties as determined by the Valuer-General. The average increase in residential properties for Willoughby as a whole was 71% However, residences in Castlecrag and Castle Cove were increased by 90%. The combined 1981 valuation of the 18,500 homes and the non-residential premises in our Municipality were assessed at \$1,003 million.

The rate is struck by dividing the balance of income to be raised by the total Residential Rating Base Factor, giving a residential rate for 1982 of 0.638¢ in the dollar.

Summing up, I can assure you that in no instance are rates being doubled, in fact our rates are the lowest on the North Shore.

For comparison, the rates payable on a residence with a rating value of \$45,000 in our adjoining Municipalities would be:

Lane Cove	\$665
Ku Ring Gai	\$486 + garbage fees
North Sydney	\$535
Warringah	\$434 + garbage fees

as against Willoughby \$287.



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SNIPPETS

* Castlecrag Kindergarten has resumed for 1982. Vacancies have been filled, however inquiries and visits to the kindergarten are always welcome. The staff at the kindergarten are Angela Jeffreys, Yvonne Grant, Heather Rogers and Julie Nathaniel.

The initial part of the year is centred around settling children in and helping them feel happy and secure. We hope that 1982 holds lots of happiness for children at the kindergarten.

* Sydney Harbour Foreshores Committee will hold another of its popular Harbour Cruises in conjunction with Australian Conservation Foundation, on Sunday, March 7, starting from Circular Quay #2, at 9.15am.

The route this time will concentrate on the western part of Post Jackson, Lane Cove and Parramatta Rivers. These trips are very popular and heavily booked, so book early. Cost \$10 per person, children \$5 each. Bring a picnic lunch.

For further information, contact Nancy Mackay on 95 3110 or Tony Howard 922 3102.

* St. James Church in Edinburgh Road is holding the "GREAT GARAGE SALE" on 6th March starting at 9.30am. Funds raised will be put to extending the community work of St. James Church.

If you have anything you'd like to give for the sale, drop it in at the Church, 184 Edinburgh Road, between 4 & 8pm on Friday 5th March, or before the sale on Saturday 6th March.



HOUSE SITTING

EXPERIENCED HOUSE SITTER WITH CASTLECRAG REFERENCES WILL CARE FOR YOUR HOME, PLANTS, ETC, WHILE YOU ARE OVERSEAS/ AWAY. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT ELIZABETH JOHNSTONE, c/- ARMOUR, THE SCARP ON 95 6498 OR (042) 29 2451.

CASTLECRAG LIBRARY

Located in the Castlecrag Community Centre, off The Postern, the Library is open on:

TUESDAY: 3.30pm to 4.30pm

THURSDAY: 12.30pm to 3.00pm

SATURDAY: 10.00am to 12.00noon

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THE CRAG is edited on behalf of the Castlecrag Progress Association by Bob Ronai, 103 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag, 2068, phone 95 4247.

NEW DOCTORS IN CASTLECRAG

The surgery in the Quadrangle is now operated by Dr. Geoffrey Nash and Dr. Vicki Freame. The all hours number for the surgery is 958 1119.

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