



NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

No. 91

Sixty nine years of community involvement
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November/December 1993

Carols

by Candlelight

at the

Haven



7.30 pm Christmas Eve

No parking at the amphitheatre

Free shuttle bus from the shops and school from 7.00 pm onwards
Candles available for purchase. Bring your own mozzie repellent.

Christmas supper will be available

Haven Amphitheatre News

Ever since the Haven Amphitheatre Castlecrag came back into operation in the 1970s, the popularity of events staged at the theatre has become obvious because of the increase in audiences. This is only to be expected as when the theatre was built back in the 1930s the population of Castlecrag would not have been more than a hundred people. Today there are approximately a thousand families in our suburb.

Many residents look forward to and enjoy the performances at the Haven. The theatre in those early days was situated in the bush surrounded by bush. Now it is your Amphitheatre very much alive and well, surrounded by the urban sprawl of Castlecrag's building boom of the 50s and 60s.

To enable this very valuable community asset to survive, the theatre committee has arranged for the community bus from Willoughby Council to run a continuous shuttle service between the theatre and Castlecrag shopping centre for all performances. The system works very well and we have had very few traffic problems created by the theatre. But be warned, unless we keep it that way, those who are against the theatre will succeed and one of Castlecrag's most significant social and cultural sites will be lost forever.

So help keep the theatre alive. **Please do not drive down to events.** Use the shuttle bus or walk down, as no performances start until the last of the bus patrons have arrived. You can always walk down and catch the bus back to the shops (the ride is free). And if you have to leave early, just ask and the bus will take you back.

The events in December, the *Messiah* and *Carols by Candlelight*, Christmas Eve, will only be successful if patrons give local residents a fair go and do not attempt to drive or park at the theatre. **Please do not even consider parking near or driving to the theatre.** Your courtesy and co-operation in this matter will ensure that the Haven Amphitheatre will survive.

Message from our Councillor

Council 24 hour emergency number 412 9100 (also over the Christmas holiday period) for any problems, trees being illegally removed etc. Also contact Councillor Sue Randle 958 6344, or leave a message on her answer machine.

Wishing all our residents a Merry Christmas and a very Happy 1994!!

On Sunday 14th November a very significant event occurred at the Haven Amphitheatre Castlecrag.

The play Marion's Gift was performed at the Amphitheatre to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the dedication and handing over of the theatre to the people of Castlecrag and the City of Willoughby.

*Marion's Gift was the inspired work of Haven Theatre Committee member **Lindy Batterham**. Lindy, with the help of **Ella Young**, members of the **Haven Playreaders** and many other residents presented a sincere and humorous piece of theatre featuring the **Griffins**, their friends, early residents, past performances at the Haven, and the history of our fine suburb.*

*The show was great community theatre at its very best. Even down to the young **Blair Ferguson** being untimely towed across the stage by his dog while **Patricia Sheldon** was trying to dispose of the head of **John the Baptist**. A short time later during the play another event worth recording took place. Those who were involved will confirm the story. Towards the end of *Marion's Gift*, **Louise Lightfoot** played by **Didi Harvey**, came to the centre of the stage to tell of her hopes and aspirations. At that moment a very cold column of air left the stage and centred around a group of people sitting at the back of the theatre. The group contained one of the few remaining friends of the **Griffins** from that time, **Betty Ainsworth**, sitting with **David Hatton**, principal of **Glenaeon School**, and **Marie McClelland**, **Eric Nicholl's** daughter (**Eric** was the partner of **Walter Burley Griffin**). The air around the group was so cold that they had to put coats on while the rest of the audience enjoyed a mild afternoon at the Haven.*

Marion's Gift was a fine piece of that theatre which touches and awakens with strength many emotions and feelings. Congratulations to Lindy and her team!

*Howard Rubie, Chairman
Amphitheatre 530A Committee*

Dear Editors,

Congratulations to Lindy Batterham in particular, but also to the many others involved in the wonderful *Marion's Gift*.

Castlecrag has been blessed over the years with the contributions of many talented people and is a much richer place because of them. Lindy showed us what a long list of people that is and her name should certainly be added to it. Thank you, Lindy.

Judy Stone - Herbert

President's Report

The reopening of our community's public **Infants School** is still the major concern of your Progress Association. During November, out of fairness to Glenaeon School, a new proposal was put to a meeting with Glenaeon chaired by the Mayor of Willoughby, John Squire. This Progress Association is determined to see a favourable outcome for the diverse community of Castlecrag, and to that end instigated the proposal. For more information be sure to read Andrew Frazer's article in this issue.

It was with great dismay that the Association became aware of the proposed subdivision of **136 Edinburgh Road, the first house built in Castlecrag by Walter Burley Griffin**, by the Historic Houses Trust (HHT) who bought it last February. The Association's preference for the GSDA No.1 Dwelling is that the existing house and its beautiful garden be conserved without additions, to retain a unique setting with its uninterrupted relationship with the neighbouring Griffin No.2 Dwelling, at the gateway to Castlecrag.

This is the ideal. However, we are aware that the Historic Houses Trust bought the house as a temporary acquisition, and that there is need to protect the house and its curtilage from development by future owners. Your Association also acknowledges the need for the Historic Houses Trust to recover the expenses of purchase and restoration of the original house. The Trust has argued that to achieve these objectives it is necessary to build a second dwelling on the large block of land and subdivide it to prevent future subdivision for Dual Occupancy under the present State Government's policies.

Within these constraints, it was pleasing that the Trust sought a design solution that would be "diminutive in scale and form, relating in a complementary fashion to its Griffin context". A good sound plan. Unfortunately, these objectives do not appear to be reflected in the Development Application which is currently before Council.

I attended the Open Day on Sunday 28th November to view the restoration work and the plans and to listen to feedback on the proposal. Not one complimentary remark was I able to hear about the proposed design from people who were interested and concerned about the final outcome and fate of the No.1 Dwelling.

I ask the Trust - where and when in Castlecrag did Griffin build a terracotta-coloured house with a pitched roof, because that, tragically, is what is planned in the HHT proposal. This has been a unique opportunity for an architect to recreate and continue the ambience and philosophy of Griffin's

design for his Castlecrag houses.

If this situation was in an historic part of Europe, there is no way that any authority would allow a cement brick bungalow to be built between two historically important houses.

HHT, please look again at your proposal, for I fear you are in danger of making a mistake, losing an opportunity for creative planning, and of perpetrating a bad decision on a great community effort.

All residents should now be aware that the draft of the Heritage and Conservation sections of the Local Environment Plan is now on display at the Council Chambers and Library. It is in your own interest to take the time to look at what is proposed. The Progress Association recognises that the plan may need some fine tuning but believes that eventually the planning and control instruments will enable the retention of the lifestyle of our unique suburb and in the medium to long term protect and enhance values. Please think carefully of the future so that our suburb will remain one of the few near-city areas (perhaps along with Hunters Hill) where planning for the people is still paramount.

Soon we will have to accept our share of urban consolidation. Your Association will fight to ensure that any development will be guided by consultation, taste and good design. Not over-the-top rampant development; hopefully that will never be the Castlecrag style.

Seasons Greetings to all from the Committee of the Castlecrag Progress Association. Please try to come to our next meeting next February. I promise you, these days it's never boring!!

Howard Rubie, President

*The old man was a dancer
He was balanced, rhythmical, selfless -
Worked with love and warmth
Light and water -
Sailed on it
Moved through it
Played with wind
Chopped wood for fire and easily crossed over.
I believe he was simply in touch with life.*

The Committee of the Progress Association shares the sadness of Blossom, Kate and Sally, Zeb and Jasmine, Isaac, Dave and Johnny, following the tragic death of Noel, resident of Castlecrag for sixty years.

Welcome to the following new businesses in the Shopping Centre:

Harvey World Travel Opens at Castlecrag

The newest addition to the Harvey World Travel Group (now with over 320 offices in Australia and New Zealand) has opened at Shop 6, The Quadrangle Shopping Village, Castlecrag.

Owned and managed by Tom and Anne Harris, it aims to provide both local residents and businesses with the best possible travel assistance, tailored to individual needs. The office is staffed by Fiona Drysdale and Michaela Loesch, who are able to make immediate bookings with airlines, hotels and car hire companies both within Australia and overseas, via *Galileo*, the world's leading travel reservation system.

All of their staff have travelled extensively in Australia, Europe and the USA. Whether you want to ski, cruise, play golf or make an important business trip, their firsthand experience will help make your tour a success.

So phone 967 2170 - or better still - call in and see Fiona, Michaela or Tom for your free passport photo (valid till 31 December 1993) and find out why Harvey World Travel are called:

THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

New Patisserie opens in Castlecrag

Jean-Paul, the owner of the new French Patisserie in the shopping centre, has impeccable credentials. He has for the past four years been the chef at La Renaissance Roseville and has produced fine French cakes and pastries for various persons and occasions ranging from the French Embassy and company cocktail parties to private functions.

Prior to working for La Renaissance Jean-Paul was production manager for Continental Patisserie Oxford Falls. He was responsible for a staff of 25 and for maintaining a first-class standard equal to none in Sydney. He has vast experience in the catering field. He came from France 14 years ago to work for the French Bakehouse in Melbourne. After a two-year contract he decided he liked the relaxed and informal lifestyle of Australia and stayed, moving to Sydney in 1988. Liking the friendly village atmosphere at Castlecrag, he spent many pleasant hours researching the area. He is very pleased with the warm welcome in Castlecrag and would like to thank the patrons for their patience during the "Fridge" dilemma. A man of many talents, he hopes to have the opportunity to produce them for the people of the Castlecrag area. Jean-Paul's is a family business and will provide personal family service.

Australia Post: New Era in the Crag

Have you seen the new Castlecrag Post Office yet? Situated at Shop 17 in the Quadrangle Shopping Village, the Post Office conforms to the "New Look" Australia Post. With an extensive range of Australia Post products, postcards, wrapping paper etc, we are sure that we can cater for just about every postal need. Also, for your convenience, you can pay your Telecom, AMP, Tax Dept and Green Slips as well as conduct your Commonwealth Passbook accounts. We have tried to make our Post Office "customer friendly", providing speedy service to our customers as well as having available to them photocopy and fax machines. For your convenience we can also do laminating.

An innovation is a parcel strapping machine for the benefit of customers. No need to go to all the trouble of metres and metres of sticky tape. Just post your parcel at Castlecrag PO and we will securely bind your parcel at no extra cost. For those who are looking for private box facilities, we should have these in the near future and we are now taking the names of interested parties.

We are also an EXPRESS POST office. Just lodge your Express Post items before 3pm for the next day delivery to the areas within the specified postcodes. Another innovation at Castlecrag PO is our office hours. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday we don't close till 5.30pm and on Thursday 6pm. For the business customer we offer the facility of monthly accounts and have the unique "Pack-n-Post" service to save you time.

Please take time to drop in and see the new Australia Post, Castlecrag. We are sure you will like what you see.

THE GALLERY CASTLECRAG

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The best collection of Australian paintings and craft arts on the North Shore is right here in Castlecrag. A friendly smile, reasonable prices and gift wrapping are all just part of our service.

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SOS*Crag welcomes Glenaeon - on a 3 year lease

A peace initiative by SOS*Crag could see Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School occupy the Infants School site on a 3 year lease. Terms would provide for continuing use of the site by the community. During the 3 years, Glenaeon would negotiate with Willoughby City Council to overcome current restrictions on expansion at their Middle Cove site. Alternatively, emerging prospects such as the adjacent Warrane Road army depot would be pursued.

Parties to the lease would be the Department of School Education, Willoughby City Council, Castlecrag Progress Association and Glenaeon. There would be a sunset clause ensuring that Glenaeon vacate the site at the end of the lease. At the end of the 3 year period, the infant population in the Castlecrag drawing area and the level of community dependence on the site would ensure its return for the sole use of residents of Castlecrag and near neighbours.

The news that Willoughby Public School is now closed to out of area enrolments, joining Northbridge which has had that status for two years, makes a mockery of Departmental claims that there is little or no growth in infant population in our area. Try to enrol a child in Castlecrag pre-school! The increase in children numbers is also evident at St James' Church where Sunday School enrolments have never been greater.

It is hoped that Freedom of Information applications lodged recently will throw some light on the methodology employed to produce demographics consistent with the Department's requirements. Information central to the anointing of Glenaeon as preferred buyer may also be interesting.

So what is Mrs Chadwick's response to the fact that her Department has got its numbers hopelessly wrong - still pushing negative graphs while her biggest local facility has closed its doors? Her response is predictably negative too - she's refused to receive a delegation from Willoughby City Council's new Mayor, John Squire. Cluster Director Glenys Hancock is similarly unrepentant about number blunders. "Write to me only if something's changed" was her minder's response to a recent request for an interview.

Of course this lease initiative requires a shift from Glenaeon's approach so far in this matter. There can be no denying that to buy a \$5 million site for \$1 million, on extended terms, is a smart move. Most developers would have little difficulty with the extenuating circumstances. But is it the kind of

deal which is consistent with "the need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility?" I think not!

Oh, by the way. If you are connected with Glenaeon and claim they have no knowledge of SOS*Crag's offer, maybe you will gain an insight into the workings of your School Council. SOS*Crag has sought meetings with Glenaeon to discuss the future of the site. We are assured that when the matter is on an agenda, we will be given an opportunity to put our case. Obviously elements of Glenaeon are far more informed as we are assured by the Department of Properties (Schools) that an exchange of contracts is imminent.

One can only hope that sanity prevails and that there is due consideration given to the effects of the future use of the site on those most dependent upon it. The lease proposal is a genuine attempt to achieve an acceptable compromise. If Glenaeon chooses to go it alone, there can be no claim of ignorance - they are well aware of the facts.

Presumably some form of public consultation will be necessary at the Local Government level. Castlecrag will support a joint proposal for a three year term. It will oppose bitterly any attempt by Glenaeon to operate the site exclusively, whether by lease or purchase. There is one certainty and that is that ultimate condemnation and eternal damnation would result from any involvement of Glenaeon in enlisting Departmental or Ministerial assistance in bypassing the consultative process. Let us never forget, the advertisement said "acceptable in the community".

Andrew Frazer for SOS*Crag

Exhibition of Draft Local Plan No.73 (Heritage and Conservation Plan)

Council has placed the above Plan, which contains heritage items and conservation areas in Willoughby City, on exhibition for public comment (on the 4th Floor of the Administrative Building or in the Chatswood Central Library). The exhibition comprises a heritage map which identifies state and regional heritage items, conservation areas deemed to be regional heritage items, local heritage items and conservation areas. With the map is a written instrument which explains what the effect of the proposed changes mean in terms of development or demolition.

The draft Plan will be exhibited for a period of five weeks commencing 24th November 1993.

CASTLECRAG LIBRARY

The Community Centre, The Rampart

TUESDAYS 3.30 - 4.30pm

THURSDAYS 1 - 5pm

SATURDAYS 10am - Noon

NEW BOOKS LIST:

BROOKNER, A	A Family Romance
FOLLETT, K	A Dangerous Fortune
STEELE, D	Vanished
DUNNE, D	Season in Purgatory
SILLITOE, A	Snowdrop
HOCKING, M	Very Dead of Winter
MASSIE, A	Caesar
MURDOCH, I	The Green Knight
CLEARY, J	Bleak Spring
VINE, B	Astra's Book
McCULLOUGH, C	Fortune's Favourites
ANTHONY, E	Exposure
SAUNDERS, K	Night Shall Overtake Us
SCOTT, J	Empty Eye of the Sea
MARTINI, S	The Simeon Chamber
HILL, S	Mrs de Winter
THOMAS, D	Voices in the Wind
THOMAS, G	Voices in the Silence
JOLLEY, E	The Georges' Wife
INNES, H	Target Antarctica
ISAACS, S	After all these years
COLLINS, J	Yes You Can

A short note of thanks Tonight, listening from home to your production of The Messiah at the Haven Amphitheatre, the sounds emanating from the valley below were simply wonderful and brought a special peace to the evening.

The effort made by your organisation to minimise any inconvenience to residents was greatly appreciated, recognising that parking and the movement of 400 people through a street considered a "goat track" is no easy task. Thanks for doing so with little or no hindrance to residents.

Your effort to bring music into a natural amphitheatre is most welcomed. The location demands a small audience under strict control, for obvious reasons. A heavenly inspiration would be that all people should have access to such events in their own suburb, but alas we know that not all suburbs were designed with the vision of Walter Burley Griffin.

Let's continue to make our own little piece of paradise and hope that others may make their own.

Trevor Sinclair

David Reynolds
The Bulwark

Jean Paul PATISSERIE



Jean-Paul Marie
Proprietor

Telephone: 967 2882
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The team from L.J. Hooker wish to thank you for your support in our new venture. Best Wishes for the Christmas season and the New Year from the licensees, Richard Graham and Bronja.

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Heritage Page

Congratulations to **Adrienne Kabos and Gay Spies** who organised the public seminar on **Willoughby's Heritage Future** on 9 November at the Dougherty Centre. Jointly sponsored by the Walter Burley Griffin Society, the Art Deco Society, WEPA, and the Willoughby Historical Society, it was attended by over 120 people including a number of council officers and Ctrs Randle, Weingarh, Cianfar, Dally, Lamb, Morgan and Deputy Mayor Cr. Raymond.

The aim of the seminar was to provide a forum for discussion on the natural, Aboriginal and built environment and to assist Willoughby City Council in the fine tuning of their Draft LEP that is now on display for public comment.

Heritage Consultant, **Meredith Walker**, chaired the seminar that had a panel of five outstanding speakers. **Val Attenbrow of the Australian Museum** spoke of the 114 registered Aboriginal sites in Willoughby (NPWS Register, March 1993), which represent about an eighth of the sites in the Sydney metropolitan area. Dr Attenbrow said that Willoughby has two important complexes of sites, and recommended that they be nominated for the Register of the National Estate. **Judy Messer of the Nature Conservation Council** provided an excellent account of the importance of conserving our environmental heritage, particularly Willoughby's 250 hectares of urban bushland, as well as the need to protect our air and water quality. She highlighted the legal and economic responsibility of councils to protect open space, waterways and bushland through strong controls on any development in adjoining areas. In relation to Council expenditure, it was interesting to note that 80% of Council open space was bushland but that it receives only 9% of the funds allocated to open space.

Muriel Ryan commended the residential 2a(2) zone in the Draft LEP and spoke of the need for new Development Control Plans for heritage areas and land adjoining bushland.

James Weirick spoke of the great value of the *suburban forest* and highlighted the Griffin heritage of Castlecrag as "Willoughby's feature of international significance." Protection of this heritage requires a community that loves its environment, wide understanding of heritage values in the community and "a lasting community activism" which ensures that valued items are protected and cared for. Community needs should be integrated within the decision making structure of Council, perhaps via citizen committees, like Leichhardt Council. While a stronger protection of environment theme is now evident in urban planning and management, the landscape is under threat from policies of urban consolidation.

David Logan, Manager of Urban Heritage at Sydney City Council, gave an excellent illustrated presentation of both sympathetic and outlandish alterations to houses and infill in the Artarmon and Chatswood conservation areas. He believes that Heritage DCPs should go on exhibition at the same time as the LEP. He also believes the character of an area can be retained by careful management by Council with community support.

The new **Environmental Services Director of Council, Greg Woodhams**, explained that the display of the Draft LEP had been delayed because of concerns about the zoning of Naremburn and Castlecrag School sites, that Council was concerned not to delay the heritage provisions and that there is a new spirit of change in Council - one of partnership with the community.

In discussing and summing up Meredith Walker suggested that a structure or process might be created which would allow the community to discuss concerns with Council. This would be in addition to formal written submissions, and would be far more productive, allowing Council and community to come to a preferred approach.

Walter Burley Griffin Search

Walter Burley Griffin, the designer of Canberra and Castlecrag, also designed many houses, shops and land subdivisions in Australia from 1913 - 1937. **Peter Navaretti, Research Assistant at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Melbourne**, is attempting to compile an inventory of all Griffin's work and is keen to contact anyone who has in their keeping photos, drawings, letters or other documents of Griffin-designed buildings or subdivisions, even if these materials are about a project that was never built. If you can help phone Peter Navaretti on (03) 344-4231 (Mon-Fri) or write to Faculty of Architecture and Planning, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria 3052.

The international standing of Griffin's Castlecrag aside, Australia's most significant man-made heritage is her railways. Bob McKillop, vice-president of the Progress Association, has documented this heritage and the efforts of many hundreds of volunteers to conserve it, in the 1994 edition of his Guide to Australian Tourist Railways and Museums. This was released through newspapers and special book outlets in late November. Arrangements have been made for copies to be stocked at the Castlecrag Newsagent.



Vincent Moran
958 0124

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RUSSELL BENN
MANAGER

The Crag is edited on behalf of the Castlecrag Progress Association (Box 6/77 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag) by Helen Levett (958 3510) and Kerry McKillop (958 4516). Contributions and letters are most welcome.