

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

No. 95

Seventy years of community development
ISSN 0814 - 2054

August/September 1994

President's Report

The Crag is the newsletter of the Castlecrag Progress Association and is printed six times per annum. A great deal of effort is expended by our editors in collecting articles and getting the copy to the printer, and then its distribution to every household in Castlecrag. This area extends from Sugarloaf Crescent to Morotai Crescent and east from Eastern Valley Way. While no intention will be made to curtail this endeavour, we would very much appreciate your greater participation in our local affairs. All battles are not yet won. Do attend our bi-monthly meetings. We welcome you!!

The very real wounds sustained by the Castlecrag community in the closure of our **Infants School** do not disappear with its current occupation. A public meeting to discuss this ongoing crisis, and its harmonious resolution, is foreshadowed and will be held very soon. Never forget that our School's closure is due to its having been a political sacrifice which was made by the current government for the Milson's Point School when that electorate went to a by-election in 1989.

At the request of the widow of the late Leonard Teale, Liz, Willoughby City Council has agreed to erect a sandstone chair in the memory of this well-known Australian, at the end of Rockley Street, on a date to be announced.

Two items of much interest to us are the Housing Strategy for Willoughby City and the potential change to a lesser number of wards and councillors. The Progress Association has submitted responses to Council and summaries of both are printed in this issue. In Castlecrag the integrity of the Griffin Estate area is, under the Dual Occupancy provisions of the government, being lost, as subdivision and large dual occupancy developments in it, come before Willoughby Council. Griffin's vision of development flowing naturally into the landscape, its walkways, reserves and foreshore protection areas, are important in our beautiful suburb, and any alienation of that unique vision is to be resisted. We hope that Willoughby Council's request to the Minister for Planning that its Heritage/Conservation areas and those properties adjoining waterfront and reserves, will be successful. Castlecrag is defined as a Conservation, not, unfortunately, a Heritage area.

Elizabeth Lander



The next meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association will be held at the Community Centre, corner The Postern and The Rampart, on Tuesday 27th September at 8pm. Come along and catch up on what's happening in your suburb! We welcome you and we welcome your input! Membership can be had at the meeting or by filling in the form at the end of the newsletter.

Willoughby City Council Housing Strategy

Policies of population dispersal through decentralisation have seen their reversal over the last 15 years and replacement with urban consolidation. While the population growth of cities in developed countries is decelerating, governments want Sydney to grow by legislating for higher population densities in the form of more flats, townhouses, villas and dual occupancies. The last census (1991) gave Sydney's population as 3.54 million.

The State Government's dual occupancy (DO) legislations, which override local councils' planning controls, have come under increasing criticism. As an example, the large public meeting last year in Willoughby Civic Centre attended by 700 people and Northside Councils, expressed particular dissatisfaction with Government's SREP 12 and SEPP 25, which were seen as environmentally unfriendly and affecting adversely people's quality of life: loss of vegetation on resulting small lots mostly covered by houses and paved areas; lack of landscaping, backyards, family living space, privacy as well as loss of Local Government's planning powers and straining already-inadequate infrastructures.

In response to councils' criticism of dual occupancy (DO) legislation, the Government has adopted a "stick and carrot" approach. It is now said that a council can be exempted from DO if it will develop its own housing strategy. This means that the council has to increase its population by increasing the number of dwellings per hectare in its area.

"Exemption" does not mean freedom from DO. It means exemption from some provisions of SREP 12 and SEPP 25 and their replacement with the council's own desired controls. Exemptions may be from prescribed minimum lot sizes, or to exclude environmentally-sensitive areas. Councils can also replace SREP 12 and SEPP 25 in their entirety with their own controls, provided their Housing Strategy is acceptable to the Department of Planning and has the Minister's approval.

Willoughby Housing Strategy covers 5 years with annual review. Housing stock increase is to be by:

- rezoning lands for high-rise (as in draft LEP 65);
- review of Special Uses (schools, defence) zonings for housing;
- remove or reduce the minimum lot requirement of 550m² in 2(b), 2(c) zones for more medium density;
- remove or increase floor space ratios for residential units in business zones.

With current and proposed controls, Council predicts an additional 5730 multi-unit dwellings (medium-high density, DO, housing for the aged);

assumes 2 persons/dwelling (Sydney assumed average is 2.7 by 2011).

At this stage, the Strategy wants exemptions from the legislation by substituting in their place its own criteria as follows:

- minimum lot size 800m² for detached DO (and subdivision);
- minimum lot size 700 m² for attached DO;
- maximum FSR 0.4:1;
- exclusion from DO for heritage/conservation areas and those adjoining Middle Harbour waterfront/reserves (the Minister has already agreed to the latter).

It should be noted that the Kinhill inquiry (DoP Technical Bulletin No.15) recommended 450m² as a reasonable detached house lot. So 900m² should be the minimum lot size for detached DO subdivision instead of 800 sought in the Strategy.

There are some figures (1991 data) of interest in the Strategy:

- Willoughby population 51,494 has been practically static for more than 4 decades, despite loss of houses to expressways and commercial/industrial developments;
- number of dwellings is 19,356, thus 2.66 persons per dwelling;
- Willoughby population density is 42.6 persons per hectare (residential area) which is higher than Inner Sydney's 35.9 and Lower Northern 25.83. This shows Willoughby's relatively high share in accommodating the population.

The Strategy does not state the number of dwellings/ha. However, one can calculate this from the above data for Willoughby as 16 dwellings/ha. The criterion to exempt Willoughby is not known, but the Government has set the density of 11 to 15 dwellings/ha, as a "short to medium term" yardstick, for new land on the urban fringes as a basis for exempting councils. Densely populated Manly with 18 dwellings/ha is standing on its urban consolidation record and wants immediate exemption from Government DO legislation.

One cannot help noticing in newspapers that, while the Government pushes aggressively for higher densities, resulting in smaller DO lots, its own agency Landcom sells at Castle Hill and elsewhere lots from 800 to 1200m², even 2000m² to include tennis courts! This does not make 11 to 15 dwellings/ha.

Gay Spies

(This article is reprinted from the WEPA newsletter with the kind permission of the author).

Expressway Committee Report

As reported in the June issue of *The Crag* last year, our Expressway Committee, originally set up in 1974, was reconvened. The new committee comprising ten of our members held its first meeting 12 months ago. This would seem to be an appropriate time to report the present position.

The most outstanding event of the year was the public meeting held on Sunday 10th April at Sugarloaf Point in the defined corridor, at the place the previously-planned bridge would stand. The meeting was chaired by Elizabeth Lander and attended by 350-400 residents. The speakers included Peter Collins (Treasurer, Member for Willoughby), Bob Carr (Leader of the Opposition), Peter Macdonald (Member for Manly), Ted Mack, Richard Jones, John Squire (Mayor of Willoughby), Gerry Nolan, Judy Messer, Jeff Angel, Caron Morrison, Matthew Hurst, Carla Bell and many others.

Clr Sue Randle introduced the meeting and I spoke on behalf of the Progress Association. Three TV stations recorded the proceedings. All speakers spoke strongly against both the bridge and a tollway, and because of this and the excellent press coverage, the Government stated that it has no intention of proceeding with the bridge.

In April this year the Minister for Planning advised that the Government has resolved to set up an urban Strategy Advisory Committee under Section 22 of the Environment Protection Act. The purpose of this committee is to advise the Minister of preferable options to alleviate the transport problems of Manly-Warringah.

Bob McKillop, one of our members, is particularly well qualified in these matters and both our Committee and the Coalition for Urban Transport Sanity (CUTS) made strong submissions for his appointment as our community representative. We were unsuccessful in this regard and Judith Rutherford of Castle Cove was appointed by Peter Collins as his representative. Judith now keeps us advised on the deliberations of the Committee.

Our other source of information is Dr Peter Macdonald, Member for Manly. He is a member of the Section 22 Committee and has held three public meetings over the past few months. Our members have attended each of these.

From these various sources it is apparent that of some 40 original submissions, the Committee rejected all but nine options. It was anticipated that at a meeting planned for September 9 the

nine options would be reduced to three. However, we are advised that the meeting has been deferred till 23 September. It is anticipated that the meetings will move more into the public domain and may involve some members of the public in workshops. If so I have asked Judith if she would recommend me. As further information becomes available we will keep readers informed.

Eric Kaye

Update on School from Castlecrag Community Inc.

As the Castlecrag community watches Glenaeon settle in to our school, many people are anxiously enquiring about the situation regarding our offer to purchase the site for \$1 million.

The people who have helped gather the signatures in support of the offer have been overwhelmed by the positive response - agreement is running at about 95%. The many new residents with young children, in particular, have expressed much sadness that there is no local public school.

Castlecrag Community Incorporated is awaiting the response of the Glenaeon School Council and parent body to our offer. We remain confident that Glenaeon will see the wisdom of returning the site to the Castlecrag community as soon as possible, and that they will not wish to profit from its sale. As soon as Glenaeon responds, which they assure us will be in the very near future, a public meeting will be held where everybody will be given an opportunity to provide input into our future plans.

The petition is going very well. If you have not been asked to sign, your street may remain to be done. Door knockers are still needed for a few streets - if you can help, please ring Tracy on 958 4884. Ten or twenty houses don't take long, and it's a great way to meet your neighbours. Everybody who has helped has enjoyed the experience.



TOGETHER WE GROW

Third Annual Service of Thanksgiving

Sunday 6 November, Haven Amphitheatre

St James Anglican Church Castlecrag invites you to attend a Community Service of Thanksgiving at 9.30am Sunday 6 November in the Haven Amphitheatre. This is an opportunity for everyone to give thanks for this wonderful environment in which we live. We hope that all interested residents, friends, representatives from community organisations and our Councillors, will attend.

The Rev. Jason Page will be conducting the service and our speaker this year will be Robert Sheldon, longtime resident and architect. Robert will include some interesting aspects on the Haven Theatre in his address.

This is the third year we have conducted this Community Service. St James is delighted to have the use of the Haven for this occasion which seems very appropriate when we are giving thanks for the beauty that surrounds us in Castlecrag. As with all Haven Theatre events, a shuttle bus will provide a transfer from The Quadrangle (and St James) to the Amphitheatre, because of the lack of parking facilities in the area. Should it be raining, the service will be held at St James Church. Refreshments will be served after the service and we would be delighted if you could join us on this occasion.



For ancients like me there were a few, a very few, good things about the second world war. One was that (in England anyway) everything which could possibly be recycled was recycled. For instance, it did not cross anybody's mind to expect a storekeeper to provide wrapping - you brought your own or did without.

As we all know, the favoured form of wrapping is now plastic bags. These are expensive to the shopkeeper, a menace to the environment, and death (literally) to marine life. Why can't we return to carrying our own containers, or at least make sure that we deposit plastic bags in the recycling container at Woolworths at Northbridge. Jewel made a brief effort to provide recycling but it died. Let's see if we can revive it.

Bridget Gilling

WALTER BURLEY GRIFFIN SOCIETY INCORPORATED

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY 16TH OCTOBER
2.30PM

CASTLECRAG COMMUNITY CENTRE
CNR THE POSTERN AND THE RAMPART

WITH GUEST SPEAKER ANNA RUDDO WHO
WILL SPEAK ABOUT MARION GRIFFIN (3.30PM)

VISIT THE OPEN DAY AT THE HISTORIC HOUSES
TRUST'S QSDA NO.1 DWELLING BEFORE THE AGM (\$5)

Willoughby's Wards and Councillors

In response to Council's draft resolution to adopt a reduction in the number of Councillors and Wards, the re-naming of the Wards, and the creation of a popularly-elected Mayor, the Association has responded after much public debate, with the following submission:

- We support the retention of 5 Wards and 15 Councillors with adjusted boundaries to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act. The savings in cost to be gained from reduced Councillor numbers are more than offset by their reduced capacity to service the needs of Ward communities.
- We are concerned that Castlecrag might become part of a Ward which would include Northbridge and Naremburn. Quite different developments are allowed there and they have no Development Control Plan as we do.
- We do not support the proposal for a popularly elected Mayor. While we acknowledge the present system with its potential for annual changes of Mayor has deficiencies, experience in Councils which have tried a popularly elected Mayor approach is hardly justification for change.
- We support the geographical nomenclature as exists.
- We prefer the status quo, with peripheral changes to the boundaries.

The Castlecrag Conservation Society will hold its next meeting at the Castlecrag Community Centre on Wednesday 19 October at 8pm. New members are most welcome. The topic to be discussed will be the Universe of Weeds - bring a weed to have it identified. Harold Spies, President 958 8569

**NEW
RELEASE**

BUILDING FOR NATURE : WALTER BURLEY GRIFFIN AND CASTLECRAIG

This new book superbly documents the history of Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin's work and life at Castlecrag, Sydney including the town planning, architecture and community activities.

The book is written by Meredith Walker, one of Australia's foremost heritage conservation planners and theorists with the assistance of Adrienne Kabos and Prof. James Weirick.

It is published by the Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc.

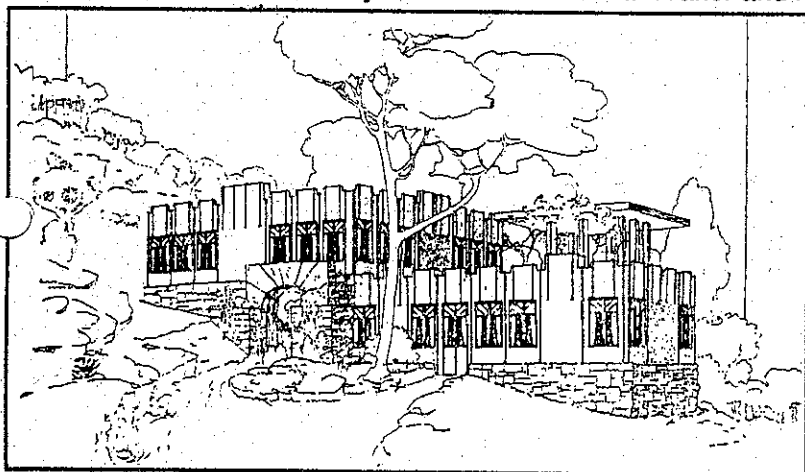
The book has over 100 illustrations including many 1920s photographs and many previously unpublished photographs by Max Dupain taken in the 1960s.

It is a fascinating history that traces the acquisition of the Castlecrag estates; the establishment of the controlling company the Greater Sydney Development Association that consisted of a diverse range of people including five federal politicians, members of Melbourne's Chinese community and a theatrical producer; the ideals that Griffin had for the estates and the difficulties he had with the authorities in implementing these unconventional ideals; the town planning and architecture of stone and knitlock (a modular concret building system patented by Griffin); the community life and activities that Walter and his architect wife Marion fostered including

the open-air Haven Amphitheatre.

Extracts from 1920s journal articles, lectures and letters written by Walter and Marion enrich the text and give great insights.

While Griffin is best known for his design of Canberra it is probably his work at Castlecrag, of building in harmony with nature, that he would prefer to be remembered. The unusual stone and knitlock architecture of each of the fourteen houses built by Griffin at Castlecrag is described and illustrated in the book. The illustration at left from the book is from a 1929 promotional brochure *Castlecrag Homes*



Described by the press as 'a most fascinating read for pure pleasure'.

The book's recommended retail price is \$25 and it is available from The Gallery, Castlecrag, Castlecrag Newsagency and selected bookshops. For further information write to the Secretary, Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc, 13 Sunnyside Crescent, Castlecrag 2068 or Fax (02) 958 8687.



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Haven Amphitheatre News
Over the winter months a number of residents
have given much time and energy to rebuild the
stage and add an undercroft/dressing area.

To celebrate its completion the Haven
Playreaders, under the direction of **Ella
Young**, will present the highly acclaimed
and enchanting

UNDER MILK WOOD
A PLAY FOR VOICES BY DYLAN THOMAS

The reading will commence at **2.30pm** on
Sunday 27th November
Walk or catch the Haven shuttle bus from
the shops or school
Remember: No parking at the theatre

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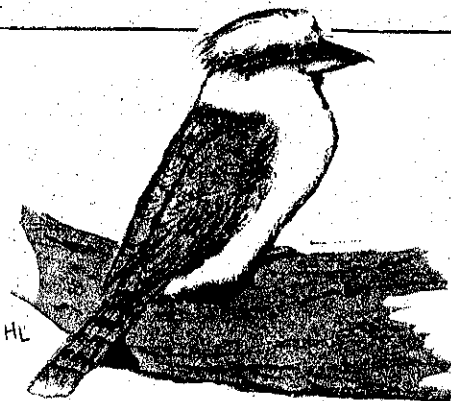
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This business is independently owned and operated by the proprietor Burley Griffin Real Estate P/L.



Kids' Page: Colour this King Parrot sitting in a local tree looking into the valley. His body is red and has green feathers on the tail and wings.



1. Why do birds never smile???
 2. Why did the worm sleep in???
 3. If you get ducks in cricket, birdies in golf, what do you get in bowls???
 4. Why is the sky so high???
 5. How did the lazy student like school???
 6. Why did the little boy think his school was haunted???
 7. Why did the orange stop in the middle of the road???
 8. What did Mrs Spider say when her new web got broken???
 9. What do you become if the teacher makes you stand outside the room???
 10. Why did the student have trouble writing the essay on cheese?
 11. Where do mad squirrels go???
 12. What is the quietest pet in the world???
- (answers are on page 8)

m o m o

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Answers:

1. *Would you smile if your mother fed you worms every day?*
2. *Because he didn't want to get caught by the early bird.*
3. *You get cereal in bowls.*
4. *So birds won't bump their heads.*
5. *Closed.*
6. *Because the teacher kept talking about the school spirit.*
7. *Because it ran out of juice.*
8. *I'll have to darn it.*
9. *An outstanding student.*
10. *Because the cheese kept blocking up the biro.*
11. *To the nut house.*
12. *A pet rock.*

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Please send to the Treasurer, Diana Jones, Box 6/77 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag.
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.

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