

Castlecrag Timeline

1978-1985

1978 Community opposition to the design of the proposed **Quadrangle shopping complex**, which was to have 17 shops and eight floors of flats above, was an issue. The Progress Association spent over \$6000 in its campaign to achieve a design that was more in keeping with the character of the area. It made a presentation to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal on the Quadrangle shopping complex and was successful in getting the Tribunal to insist on major changes to the design, including height restrictions, deletion of a fast-food outlet and a half-case market, together with conditions on signage.



Today's community atmosphere of The Quadrangle Shopping Village is the legacy of the efforts by the Castlecrag Progress Association to reduce the scale of the proposed development in the early 1980s.

1978 The **Conservation Society** engaged noted landscape consultant Judy Messer to prepare a program of clearing and regeneration of Castlecrag's reserves, walkways and islands in order to preserve the remaining indigenous flora. A landscape plan using several hundred trees and shrubs followed. Judy Messer wrote several articles on conservation matters in *The Crag*.

1978 The **Castlecrag Heritage and Classification Committee** submitted its proposal to list Castlecrag Peninsula as a town planning and urban conservation area to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in March. The Griffin Estate was listed by the National Trust in July 1978.

1978



Plaque in Keep Reserve

The Bim Hilder 'Old Man Banksia' relief has been retained on modern signs for the Griffin Reserves in Castlecrag.

Bim Hilder MBE designed bronze plaques using 'early Griffin lettering' and a *bas-relief* of an 'Old Man Banksia'. The plaques are discretely mounted in the Griffin Estates in recognition of restoration work undertaken by the Castlecrag Conservation Society; to define the estate; to promote and encourage retention, conservation and restoration of the reserves and islands; and to honour significant members of the Castlecrag community.

1979 The death of a child knocked down by a motorcycle on Edinburgh Road on Mothers' Day prompted fresh calls for action to improve traffic safety in Castlecrag.

1980 Bob Ronai, the editor of *The Crag* gave the August newsletter (No.13) a facelift, introducing offset printing and a quarto page size.

1980 **The Progress Association** protested to the Chairman of the Commonwealth Bank over its failure to liaise with the community over the design of the new bank building for Castlecrag. It claimed the building was too high, too close to the street and of poor aesthetic appearance.

1980 Alderman Street advised that she was unable to continue on Council and the Progress Association endorsed its president, **Eric Kaye**, as its candidate for the Council elections. Eric

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stated that his aim was to preserve Castlecrag's quiet beauty for the enjoyment of Sydney's future generations. His specific concerns were continued opposition to the Warringah Freeway, increased Council support for regeneration of Castlecrag's bushland reserves, opposition to high-rise flats and support for a Middle Harbour National Park. He was elected to Council at this election and again in 1983, becoming Deputy Mayor in 1985.

- 1981 **The National Trust of Australia** (NSW Branch) formally classified the 'Castlecrag Urban Conservation Area' in April to recognise 'Griffin's sensitivity towards the site and his intentions to provide an environment in which Man could be at peace with Nature. The listing is to acknowledge Griffin's ingenuity as expressed in his road patterns and their sympathy for the topography of Castlecrag, and in his series of internal public reserves and connecting footpaths for common use and social interaction.'
- 1981 The Progress Association's new committee, headed by Gavin Thomas as president, sought to develop a comprehensive plan for improved traffic management in Castlecrag. A Traffic Committee was formed and conducted a survey of traffic problems in Castlecrag was included in *The Crag* No. 17 (March/April). There was a strong response to the survey, with the need for a right-turn at the Eastern Valley Way traffic lights a dominant concern.
- 1981 Willoughby Municipal Council established the Castlecrag Advisory Committee of eleven local residents in June to prepare the **Castlecrag Local Environment Study**. Issues of concern for the Committee were the number of unsympathetic developments in the suburb, changes to the streetscape through the replacement of the original stone kerbing and the need for stronger measures to preserve the foreshore bushland
- 1981 The **Willoughby Environmental Protection Association** (WEPA) was established with Castlecrag residents Gay and Harold Spies playing a prominent role. WEPA pursues conservation of the natural bushland and landscape. It has opposed encroachments on reserves and public space, unsympathetic Development Applications adjoining bushland, sale of open space and community land, and lowering of the Foreshore Building Line. WEPA successfully lobbied WCC for the establishment of the Bushland Advisory Committee in 1990, initiated and organised the Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project continuously since 1985 – supported by Federal and State grants. It nominated the Middle Harbour Landscape Conservation Area for the Register of the National Estate and the Register of the National Trust.
- 1982 Willoughby Municipal Council released the **Castlecrag Local Environment Study** prepared by the Castlecrag Advisory Committee in November. Its purpose was 'to provide a basis for the preparation of a Local Environmental Plan.'
- 1982 The Progress Association, led by Eric Kaye, made a number of presentations to the **Kirby Inquiry on the future use of the Warringah Freeway Corridor**, backed by a report by the Total Environment Centre commissioned by the Progress Association. 67 Castlecrag residents also made submissions. The six recommendations of the Inquiry supported the Progress Association's position.
- 1983 **Rita Kaye** took over as editor of *The Crag* with Ann Korner as her assistant.
- 1984 Consultant landscape architect, John Butterworth prepared a '**Walking Trails Development Plan**' for Willoughby City Council. As a result of Council's inaction on the above plan, the Progress Association formed the Castlecrag Walking Trails Subcommittee. It undertook numerous site inspections and prepared a report, 'Recommendations for Walking Trails in Castlecrag', for the restoration of walkways at Castlecrag. The report was submitted to Willoughby Council in November 1987.

Castlecrag Timeline

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1985 WEPA initiated the **Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project**, which continues to the present day with the assistance of grants, including Environmental Trust Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants.

1985 The Progress Association celebrated its 60th birthday with a quilting exhibition at St. James Church. The event attracted several of its oldest members, including Frank Duncan, Bim Hilder and Phyl and Michael Stoker. The President, Dianne Street, welcomed the guests and Alderman Eric Kaye opened the exhibition. Quilters from all over the State were represented and \$1800 was raised, which was donated to the bus shelter funds and maintenance of the Haven Amphitheatre.



Castlecrag residents Bim Hilder (left) and Frank Duncan at the CPA quilting exhibition in 1985.
Photo, Rita Kaye