

# THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
CASTLECrag PROGRESS ASSOCIATION.

March, 1978.

Welcome to this first edition of "the Crag" - over the years the Castlecrag Progress Association has issued many newsletters, but now we hope to bring you a regular (about every two months) publication featuring information on pressing problems in the area, our local Alderman's report on Council's goings-on, a bit of history of the suburb, and reports from our Conservation Society on beautification of Castlecrag.

Important too will be notice of the next meeting, and Progress Association matters in general.

We hope you enjoy our little publication and will look forward to receiving it in your letterbox each couple of months.

Bob Ronai

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The Continuing Story of...

## THE PROPOSED SHOPPING COMPLEX

Remember our last newsletter of 2nd February in which we reported that the Council had deferred approval of the development pending advice from its solicitors and from the Minister for Planning and Environment? Well, many things have happened since then.

The Council decided at a subsequent committee meeting to approve the development subject to a number of conditions, one of them being that the development shall not include a take-away food restaurant. The question of approval of such a restaurant would be treated as a separate development application by the developer, and Council indicated that there is no guarantee that such an application would be approved. We note however, that there is no indication in Council's decision that such an application would definitely be rejected. Also, it is expected that once approval is obtained by the developer for the restaurant, the take-away restaurant approval would be only a matter of formality provided there is space available for a carpark nearby to cope with the additional parking demand. We understand that there is such a space to be made available in Raeburn Avenue behind the existing shops.

The Association has not been advised officially by Council of the above decisions. We expect to be formally advised in due course. In the meantime, the developer decided to appeal against Council's decision and took the matter to the Local Government Appeals Tribunal. By Friday, 3rd March, the developer decided to withdraw the appeal and leave out the take-away food restaurant, but by then Council also decided that the matter had to be resolved by the Tribunal and that Council's solicitor would not oppose an application by the Progress Association to be heard by the Tribunal.

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In all fairness we must report that the Executive of the Association was very active while all this was going on, and strong representations and pleas were made to the Minister for Planning and Environment and the corresponding Shadow Minister to ensure that the residents' opposition to the development be regarded as a genuine local problem without political implications, and that they be allowed to give evidence and express their opposition at the Tribunal's hearing. The Association also engaged Counsel and took all necessary steps to ensure that if it were allowed to be heard by the Tribunal, the residents' case would be well presented.

I hope you have not been holding your breath all this time, but here it comes. On Tuesday, 7th March, following representations by the Minister's solicitor, the Tribunal allowed the Association to be heard but without the right to cross-examine any other witnesses, and we understand that this is a very rare happening. So far the hearing has lasted two days which were taken up mostly by submissions by all parties and evidence and cross-examination of six residents and one consultant representing the Association, and one consultant for the developer. The case was adjourned until Monday 8th May, when the Tribunal will inspect the site, and the hearing will resume on 9th May and 10th May. Our thanks go to the Minister for Planning and Environment, also to his counterpart in the Opposition, and to the Appeals Tribunal for their interest and concern.

From submissions made to date, and evidence given, it appears that the information reported in the Association's earlier newsletters was in part correct and in part not so correct. For instance, we reported that the restaurant was intended to be a take-away food restaurant run by McDonald's, and that the new supermarket was to be occupied by the present supermarket tenants as a half-case food barn. This much was admitted so far in the submission and in cross-examination. But we were wrong about the number of shops in the new development. There will be not 13 shops as reported earlier, but 22 new shops in addition to the restaurant and the supermarket!

And, according to a report submitted by the developer's traffic consultant, all these new shops will not cause much problem, particularly with parking, because a survey has shown that on a Wednesday between 12 noon and 5pm there were 63 to 86 vacant parking spaces available; on a Thursday between 5pm and 9pm there were at least 53 spaces available; and on a Saturday morning between 9am and 12 noon there were between 39 and 82 spaces available. All of these spaces were "within easy walking distance" around the shopping area. We do hope that those of you who know the whereabouts of these vacant parking spaces would tell everyone else.

It is obvious that the Association should submit its own traffic report which, we are sure, would not have to be biased to put forward the true picture.

At our next meeting we will have the traffic report, planning report, and the latest plans of the proposed development, (3rd or 4th amendment) for everyone's perusal and comments.

Con Saltis

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NEXT PROGRESS ASSOCIATION MEETING  
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WEDNESDAY, 22nd MARCH, 1978  
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8pm at CASTLECRAG COMMUNITY CENTRE  
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SPECIFICALLY TO REPORT ON  
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THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT  
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SEE YOU THERE  
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

The inaugural meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association was held in the basement of the Castlecrag shops (now the Wine Cellars?) on 10th November, 1925. "Before commencing business, the Misses May gave two elocutionary items which were greatly appreciated." E.W. Herbert was elected President. Walter Burley Griffin was on the Executive Committee.

The Association struggled for mundane things like a Post Office, transport, garbage collection, electricity and sewerage, and worked for community needs - a school, community hall, a park in Sunnyside Crescent, the annual children's Christmas party, and tree planting in streets in spite of potholes and the fact that "straying cattle are a hindrance to any street beautification." (Today its dogs!)

Came the Depression and then the War. Interest was centred on the construction of Eastern Valley Way, a memorial to local hero Lt. Chowne VC, a local polling booth for elections, and clothing coupons, the war effort and a suggestion that "hunter's horns be issued to the local N.E.S. warden" for air raid warnings.

The Progress Association was discontinued soon after the Castlecrag and East Willoughby Co-operative Society was formed to build and administer the Community Centre. It was re-established when the Co-operative was wound up and the Centre handed over to Willoughby Council.

Today the name "Progress Association" is kept only in deference to those who worked for the amenities we now enjoy. Aims are different. Members work through Sub-Committees to preserve the unique character bequeathed to the suburb by its early residents. We also nominate a candidate, for Local Government, who is in sympathy with these aims.

We have had the notorious (?) Anti-Expressway Committee. At present there is a Conservation Society, concerned with the regeneration of native plants on the traffic islands and reserves, and a Heritage Committee working to have the suburb listed for the National Trust. At our last meeting a National Park Committee was formed to work for a park on our northern foreshores. And of course there is our "all out" drive to prevent unsympathetic development at the entrance to the 'Crag.

Addie Saltis

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Our fight against the shopping complex is costing us several thousand dollars, but we think this is entirely justified. We fully believe that the appearance of this building at the gateway to our suburb, plus the traffic, noise and other problems caused by it, will cause a reduction of thousands in the value of each and every home in Castlecrag. To carry on our fight, we need members, and we need money. Please help us help our suburb to survive as we want it! .....

The Secretary,  
Castlecrag Progress Association,  
c/- 103 Edinburgh Road,  
Castlecrag 2068

Fees:  
\$2.00 p.a. per person  
or \$4.00 per family

I wish to join my family up to the Castlecrag Progress Association and help our suburb remain as we the residents like it. I enclose my cheque for: \$4 subscription plus \$6 donation, total \$10  
\$4 subscription plus \$16 donation, total \$20  
\$4 subscription plus \$ donation, total \$

.....  
signature .....

ALDERMAN'S REPORT  
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Ald. Dianne Street,  
9 The Barbican,  
Castlecrag. 2068

Few people realise that Castlecrag has an important part to play in history as the forerunner of modern residential town planning. We, the present-day residents, must not let apathy or ignorance destroy our heritage.

Hence my efforts in Council to have the matter of the development at the entrance to Castlecrag brought before the Local Government Appeals Tribunal for an independent decision.

One of my many aims as your Alderman on Willoughby Council is to improve communications and co-operation between Council staff and residents, to benefit us all.

The stand taken by the majority of residents over this particular development is starting to lead to a more enlightened approach by Council to both HOME and COMMERCIAL building, irrespective of the Tribunal's decision in this case.

As an example, recently stop-work notices were issued for shoddy workmanship on buildings now being constructed in our suburb.

As I am also Chairman of the Castlecrag Heritage & Classification Committee, it is my duty to ensure that future development should improve the character and privacy of the area -- not destroy it.

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On 21st February, 1978, at the Progress Association's Annual General Meeting, the new Executive was chosen:

- President - Rhody Thomas (phone 95 6033)
- Vice-President - Con Saltis (phone 95 6409)
- Secretary - Bob Ronai (phone 95 4247)
- Treasurer - John Minchin (phone 95 1686)
- Asst. Secretary - Marsella Cerna
- Committee - Bev. Blacklock, Hugh Buerich, Eric Kaye, Marilyn Rob, Heidi Spiegel.

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Well, that's it for the first issue of "the Crag" till next time.

We apologise if your copy is not quite perfect, as our borrowed duplicator has teething problems... not those of a new machine but an old one whose teeth have long since fallen out.

We hope you've enjoyed our little publication, and if you'd like to write something brief for a future issue, or if you'd like to help in the distribution to the homes in your street, please contact Bob Ronai on 95 4247 and have a chat.