

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

No. 100

Seventy one years of community development ISSN 0814 - 2054

April/May 1995

A Crag Century

This is the 100th edition of *The Crag.* Looking through my files, I find that the earliest newsletters I have are seven prepared by Tom McConnell (a committee member) in 1974 and three published in 1976 by Rhody Thomas. In March 1978, Bob Ronai, a member of the Progress Association Committee and of a committee appointed by Council to handle the affairs of the Community Hall, decided to produce a four page paper and call it *The Crag.*

The first issue included a report from our then Alderman, Dianne Street, names of the newly elected committee, a brief history of the Association and details of the shopping centre to be built at the corner of Eastern Valley Way and Edinburgh Road. The community felt the proposal was too large for the position. The second edition, dated April 1978, contained the first article by Beverley Blacklock on behalf of the Conservation Society, "A History Before the Blackman" by Addie Saltis, an Alderman's Report and a notice for a auction sale to raise funds to fight for alterations to the plans for the proposed shopping centre [We had to fight this in the Environment Court and were successful in gaining significant improvements to the design.]

In August 1980, Bob decided to give *The Crag* a facelift. He announced that "No. 13, will be produced by offset printing instead of our old method on a very ancient Roneo stencil duplicator". To pay for printing, we approached our local shopkeepers for advertising. Three paid advertisements were included in Issue 13: Castlecrag Meats, Castlecrag Cellars and the Castlecrag Squash Centre. An advertisement by

Rita Kaye

Chem-mart, our local chemist, and two interesting pen drawings were included in the following issue. The Crag continued to be published under the editorial direction of Bob Ronai and retained its very high standard until he retired from the job in 1982 with 26 issues to his credit. By this time, many more shopkeepers were advertising to assist with costs. I took up the editorial role with the help of Ann Korner - and later Kerry McKillop - until 1988, when Eric and I went on an extended camping trip around Australia. Since then, the editor's job has been in the hands of Kerry, first with the help of Mary Baker, then Judy Stone-Herbert and now Helen Levett. The presentation of The Crag has improved tremendously over the years. It is a production of which the Association can be proud.

I have found it interesting when looking back through past issues of The Craq to note the wide variety of subjects which have been dealt with throughout the years and what we as an association have tried to achieve. The Crag has consistently worked for the preservation of our suburb's heritage and its natural environment. The Castlecrag community's fight against the Warringah Freeway was helped by our many residents who made submissions to the Kirby Inquiry when asked to do so through The Crag. For almost 20 years, The Crag has been the means of keeping our residents informed of local issues and of encouraging their participation in local activities. On behalf of the Association, I offer our thanks to those who have contributed to. and those who have distributed The Crag over the

The next meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association will be held on Tuesday 2 May, 1995 at 8 pm at the Community Centre, corner The Postern and The Rampart, Castlecrag. All are welcome

National Trust Heritage Award

The Walter Burley Griffin Society has won the Sydney section of the 1995 community Electricity/National Trust Heritage Awards for its book Building for Nature: Walter Burley Griffin and Castlecrag. WBGS President Adrienne Kabos was presented with the award by Peter Luck at a luncheon held at the Museum of Contemporary Art on 5 April. Congratulations to the WGB Society and authors Meredith Walker, James Weirick and Adrienne Kabos for this award and their effort in publishing this outstanding record of Griffin's work. Copies of this award-winning book are available at \$25. Ring 958 4516 to purchase copies.

Heritage Week in Castlecrag

Castlecrag community groups were active in organising activities for Heritage Week from 2-9 April. Bus and short walks were conducted around the Castlecrag Conservation Area. These included guided tours along the Griffin walkways to the Haven Amphitheatre led by Sean Lander, and a talk by conservation architect Scott Robertson at the historic foreshore cottages on the importance of preserving significant heritage items such as the cottages for future generations. Afternoon tea was served by the cottage caretakers and the Progress Association.

Council Review of FBL

At its meeting of 3 April, Willoughby City Council resolved that no change be made to the Foreshores Building Line (FBL) at this stage, pending the results of a comprehensive review of the FBL. The review will re-examine all the FBLs in Castle Cove, Middle Cove, Castlecrag and Northbridge. The review process will include a formal local environmental study (LES). All property owners affected by the FBL and the scenic protection areas zones Residential 2(a2) will be notified of the review and LES. The LES will be conducted by an independent group of consultants, while a FBL Committee will be established to oversee the study.

The draft terms of reference for the review are to:

- determine appropriate objectives for establishment of foreshore building lines in Castle Cove, Middle Cove, Castlecrag and Northbridge;
- carry out analysis of the location of FBLs having regard to the objectives;
- consult with individuals and organisations concerned with the establishment of FBLs; and

 submit a report for consideration by Council in respect to the siting of any proposed FBLs, criteria for alteration on application to Council and appropriate provisions to be included in any draft LEP.

It is proposed that a number of public meetings will be held to facilitate consultation. The review is expected to take six months.

Leonard Teale Memorial

Willoughby Council have agreed to the erection of stone seats and time capsule in the reserve at the end of Rockley Street to commemorate the life of Leonard Teale. Liz (Harris) Teale and friends are donating the stone and time capsule. The plaque will be donated by the Progress Association. The Mayor, John Squire, will officiate at a ceremony to be held at 10.30 am on 21 May to name the lookout after Leonard Teale.

DA 3 The Scarp

This development has aroused considerable controversy in the suburb. The dwelling currently being erected on the property was approved by Council on 9 May 1994, with deletion of the proposed second floor level, including stair, void, office and office storeroom.

Two subsequent development applications were made for home office additions. These were refused by Council on 4 October 1994. The applicant lodged an appeal with the Land & Environment Court, who dismissed the appeal primarily on the basis of the bulk and scale of the proposal and, to a lesser extent, on the view of the proposal when viewed from the entrances to the Haven Amphitheatre and 15 The Barricade.

A further DA was lodged with Council to provide a study, bathroom and walk-in robe on the second floor level. Council received 43 submissions regarding this DA, of which three supported the proposal. The Progress Association was among the objectors on the grounds that:

- the house is already in excess of the allowable floor space limits under DCP3;
- the design of the proposed extension is out of keeping with the design of the area; and
- the requested exemption to normal rules creates a precedent for future building applications.

Council are to consider this DA on 25 April.

The next meeting of the Castlecrag Conservation Society will be held on Wednesday 17 May at the Community Centre, 8pm. President Harold Spies will give a slide and specimen presentation on Fungi of Castlecrag and its environs. All welcome!!!

Planning Controls and Castlecrag's Future

The Castlecrag Progress Association has a proud record through its efforts over the years to protect the unique heritage of our peninsula suburb. The Association's position on conservation and development issues and the planning framework within which these are addressed has been placed on public record through the pages of The Crag. Topics covered in past issues include: Castlecrag Local Environment Study (No. 23, March 1982); the Foreshores Scenic Protection Area (No. 40, May 1985); Foreshores Building Line (No. 67, September 1989); the effectiveness of DCP3 and traffic management issues (86, Jan.93); draft LEP73 (Heritage and Conservation) and the draft DCP for Control of Development Adjacent to Bushland (92, Feb. 1994).

In *The Crag* No. 92, the outcome of a public meeting held on 20 December 1993 to discuss LEP73 was reported. This meeting expressed strong support for the general principle of the Draft LEP73, particularly the inclusion of the Griffin Estate as a Conservation Area. A number of residents expressed concerns that the Special Provisions of the Draft were "too vague" and should be strengthened further.

The Progress Association recognises that past achievements in maintaining the heritage of our suburb, with its balance between the built and natural environments, contributes to our quality of life and makes Castlecrag a desirable place to live. Consequently, many new residents have come into our community. In some instances, new residents may not fully appreciate the background to the Castlecrag heritage and the values which have built up a remarkable urban environment. Others have brought value systems to the suburb which place individual freedom above public interest. These individuals oppose planning controls which restrict their freedom to develop their properties as they see fit.

With these changes, the Progress Association has been under pressure from competing interest groups. On the one hand, residents who have been adversely affected by recent developments in the suburb, such as those at 343 Edinburgh Road, 10 Sortie Port, 4 The Barbette and 3 The Scarp, have complained that the Association has done too little to support their individual interests. By implication, these residents are seeking stronger controls over future developments.

On the other side, the Association is being attacked for supporting planning controls over the freedom of residents to develop their properties. The Foreshores Building Line (FBL) established in 1985 and incorporated into LEP65, has been the target of this group. As a result of concerns raised

at the February meeting of the Progress Association, the President arranged for concerned residents to meet with Middle Harbour Ward Councillors and Council officers, chaired by the mayor to discuss the FBL. At the meeting on 23 March, spokespersons for the group asked for a revision of the FBL in LEP65.

On 11 April, some 40 FBL affected residents from Castle Cove, Castlecrag and Northbridge held a meeting to discuss their grievances. Calling themselves *The Reasonable Greens*, the group claim that "greens" have gained too much influence on Council, resulting in controls which restrict their freedom. They are now seeking the elimination of the FBL from LEP65 on the grounds that it restricts their opportunity to develop dual occupancies and cluster housing on their blocks. An ongoing group has been established to lobby Council and the Department of Planning. Members of the group have indicated they will challenge the Progress Association at its next meeting on 2 May.

The background to the FBL was detailed in The Crag for March 1995 (No. 98). The FBL is a development standard in DCP3 (Castlecrag) which provides an important mechanism to prevent visual and ecological degradation of the Middle Harbour foreshores. Maintaining the integrity of these foreshores is not simply the concern of landowners in the area, nor the Castlecrag community. Middle Harbour with its balance. between the natural and environment is one of the features of international significance on which Sydney's tourist industry is based and which contributes to the quality of life of all Sydneysiders. It is on these grounds that the previous National Party Minister for Planning moved to impose tighter controls on foreshores development, including restrictions occupancy and reinforcement of the FBL. The Progress Association anticipates that the new Labor Government will maintain this policy in the wider public interest.

The controls used by Council - floor space ratios, height controls, setbacks, the FBL, etc - to manage development pressure in the wider public interest are of vital concern to all Castlecrag residents. That the grievances recently expressed by residents call for tighter controls on the one hand and more freedom for "development" on the other, suggests that the planning process for LEP65 has got it right. However, there is no room for complacency. Come along to the Association's meetings and have your say.

Bim Hilder: A Remembrance

For more years than I can remember, the name "Hilder" has been associated with this suburb. It is well known, and others have recorded it, that through his association with Walter Burley Griffin, Bim Hilder made a considerable contribution to the physical landscape of Castlecrag as a designer and builder.

Bim also contributed to another landscape - the landscape of the mind - the social landscape that arose from the practice of his art, his skills as a sculptor. Not long after I came to live in Castlecrag I became a member of a small group who prevailed upon Bim to let us meet in his studio once a week and learn to carve or construct under his watchful eye. It was then that I came to appreciate his skills and marvel at his prodigious generosity of spirit.

Bim Hilder had educated hands; the most highly educated hands I have ever known. Whatever he touched - tree branch, tree root, solid block -he transformed into an elegant graceful object. His skills were matched by his humility. If nothing else, I learned from Bim how to recognise whether a sculptor had solved all the problems that he or she had grappled with.

It was a privilege, an experience to know Bim Hilder. He was a lovable man. He enriched the lives of all who knew him. Truly he could say, as did Christopher Wren, "those who desire to see

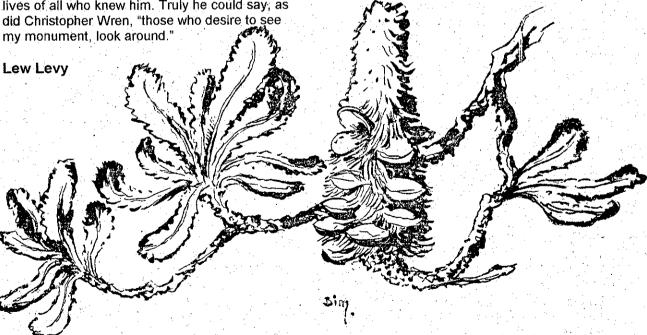
Willoughby Park Centre

East Willoughby Pre-School, operating at the Willoughby Park Centre, have been successful in obtaining a \$5000 grant from the Department of Sport & Recreation for playground equipment. The grant will be used for the first stage of the redevelopment of the playground. A long-term plan has been prepared with the assistance and support of the Willoughby Park Centre and the landscape designer from Willoughby Council.

Stage one of the project involved the purchase and installation of a *Cloud* climbing frame from Kompan Equipment. They playground is open to the general public and is used consistently by local children of all ages. The Progress Association commends the East Willoughby Pre-School group for their initiative in developing the plan and obtaining the grant. We wish them well with their project.

Griffin house, 136 Edinburgh Road

The Progress Association and so many of her old Castlecrag pupils, congratulate Isobel Jack on her purchase of the newly restored first Griffin house in Castlecrag. Miss Jack was headmistress of the Castlecrag Infants' Public School during the fifties. She has lived in our suburb since 1952



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. The deadline for the next issue is 31 May.

Please support our sponsors. Without their help this newsletter could not be printed.

EARLY MEMORIES OF CASTLECRAG

Notes on the speech given at Castlecrag Progress
Association AGM by Joyce Batterham

Joyce Batterham first came to Castlecrag in 1932 as a sixteen year old. It was the year the bridge opened. Castlecrag was a compact and isolated community in those days. The only motor car belonged to Wally Trinick. Walter and Marion Griffin were very influential and most of the cultural activities in the community generated by them. Joyce remembers being in great awe of Marion. Walter's personality was different and Joyce helped him plant trees along Road. Walter was Edinburgh an early environmentalist who selected local indigenous tree species for planting.

Joyce moved to Newcastle in 1934 with her parents but frequently came back to Castlecrag. In 1941, she settled in the suburb with her husband Bob. They moved into the Griffin house in The Citadel with Joyce's brother Rawson Deans and his wife Nancy.

In general, those who came to live in Castlecrag at this time were not wealthy. They did a lot of their own building work. The Progress Association was then concerned with such basic issues as kerbing and guttering.

After the War there was a baby boom. Dr Rivett added the maternity wing to the hospital and funds were raised to establish the Community Centre where the kindergarten could be reestablished. A co-operative society was formed, largely through the efforts of Frank Duncan, and Willoughby Council offered to give pound-for-pound to see the project completed. It took three years to build the Community Centre using voluntary labour. Eric Nicholls gave free architectural services.

Children from Castlecrag went to East Lindfield Public School which involved long travel times. Agitation began for a local school. The Castlecrag Infants' School was opened in 1950. This enabled Castlecrag children to go from kindergarten to school and a compact group of parents and children grew together:

Joyce went on to talk about various long-term residents, some of whom no longer live here but who still remember their time in Castlecrag. She emphasised that there IS something special about Castlecrag.

CPA CONSTITUTION

The Castlecrag Progress Association's Constitution, adopted in 1992, has been reviewed. The rules for the eligibility of new members to stand for office have been interpreted by Richard Horsley, Barrister. At the February meeting of the CPA, Gordon Shrubb moved a Special Resolution to change the qualifying time before voting is allowed from two months to one month. As this is a constitutional matter, a majority of 75% of members present is required for the change.

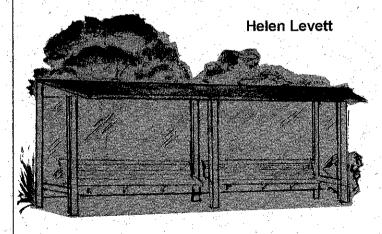
Notice is hereby given that the Special Resolution will be put to the Progress Association meeting on 2 May, 1995.

Mrs Chapple made Life Member of the Castlecrag Progress Association

At the AGM on 19th March, Hilda Chapple was made a Life Member of the Association, to recognise her courage and generosity in her stand to retain the Castlecrag Infants School.

Castlecrag Bus Shelter

Castlecrag residents will be pleased to hear that the bus shelter at the corner of Edinburgh Road and Eastern Valley Way which was removed for RTA road widening works, is to be replaced with a **double shelter**. Following representation by the Progress Association, Council have agreed that the shelter will **not have advertising**. The panels will remain clear. The area will be revegetated by Council and local groups. Council anticipates that this shelter will be installed in the next three weeks.





CASTLECRAG LIBRARY

The Community Centre, The Rampart TUESDAYS 3.30-4.30 pm THURSDAYS 1-5 pm SATURDAYS 10 am-noon

NEW BOOK LIST

SCOTT-FITZGERALD, F, The Love of the Last

Tycoon

EASTERMAN, D SOUHAMI, D FOLLETT, J ADAM-SMITH, P.

Greta & Cecil Those in Peril Goodbye Girlie

MANDELA, N TREGLOWN, J Long Walk to Freedom Roald Dahl

The Judas Testament

TULLIO, P BENNETT, A North of Naples, South of Rome Writing Home

LEAMER, L SALKFIELD, A SEVERIN, T

The Kennedy Women People in High Places in Search of Ghenghis

Khan WINTON, T

In the Winter Dark The Fifth man

PERRY, R O'ROURKE, PJ

All the Trouble in the World

Answers to quiz in Crags 96 and 97:

- The Tower Reserve
- The Citadel
- 3. The Parapet
- The Rampart 4.
- The Bastion
- The Barbette б
- The Bulwark
- 8 The Scarp
- The Haven
- 10. Gargoyle Reserve
- 11. The Cortile Reserve
- 12. The Barricade

- 13. The Postern
- The Barbican
- The Bartizan
- The Retreat Reserve 16.
- 17. Embrasure Reserve
- Casement Reserve 18.
- 19. The Keep Reserve
- The Barricade 20.
- The Haven Reserve 21.
- 22. The Redoubt

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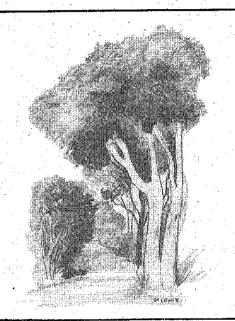
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Leonard Teale Memorial Lookout Commemoration Ceremony 10.30 am, 21 May, 1995 All residents welcome but parking is limited.



Extracts from Talk by Scott Robertson on Sugarloaf Bay Houses Heritage Week 1995

(Scott Robertson is a conservation architect and director of Robertson and Hindmarsh P/L, Architects)

These houses are administered by Willoughby Council and the land on which they stand is zoned as open space. They are a remnant of a time when Sydney was divided by, organised by and governed by its harbour, maritime industries, port traffic and cross-harbour traffic. The boatsheds stored boats and housed boat builders and sail makers. Small boats were constructed here and there is documentary evidence of at least one small ship being fitted-out.

The small stone building to the west is said to have been built around 1883 as a cookhouse for Horsley's Boatshed. The boatshed stood in front of the stone cottage and was a substantial timber structure. 297A Edinburgh Road, which is the third house owned by Willoughby Council and which is located further along Sugarloaf Bay to the east, was a 1920s fisherman's cottage and is a rare remnant on Sydney Harbour of earlier times when isolated parts of the harbour were used as a retreat. The significance of these items lies in the fact that:

- they are residences which were linked with waterfront industry;
- they are still in their original location;
- they are physical reminders of Sydney's maritime history which is fast disappearing and being replaced with waterfront luxury homes and the use of the harbour by pleasure craft rather than a grimy, working, prosperous port.

Mr Robertson went on to ask, why bother keeping these relics of the port? He responded that as the awareness of the community is increased with regard to an understanding of our physical environment and of the importance of all periods of our history and architectural styles, so too does the desire to conserve the physical reminders of our past. Conservation is also an important part of keeping our culture alive, of keeping our social memory vital and, by extension, keeping us moral and accountable. In other words, conservation is also about keeping things which we should not forget.

With respect to heritage items, Mr Robertson asked what rights do owners have? He responded that as owners, we do not have unlimited rights, and must bow to the community's wishes in a myriad of ways so

that the community and city can continue to function. When we own property we are but temporary guardians of a piece of the earth. We must be good guardians and our decisions about what we do with our property should be governed by the welfare of the community and the sustainability of life on this planet. As an architect I am constantly confronted by what unskilled, thoughtless people do to their properties.

As people are only temporary owners of a property, the community must safeguard its heritage and memory in the longer term by having extensive registers of heritage buildings. Willoughby Council's recent decision concerning its list of heritage properties is short-sighted and will eventually result in a local government area devoid of heritage, devoid of social or community memory and therefore devoid of a common community spirit capable of maintaining let alone creating a pleasant environment for the future.

In conclusion, Mr Robertson noted that the foreshore cottages have the following important lessons for us:

- they pré-date zoning laws and therefore predate our now outmoded concepts of appropriate land use. In fact their time has come again in showing us the way forward with a flexible approach to land use;
- these houses remind us of our past maritime history and waterfront history in the quiet upper reaches of the harbour. In fact they have a pioneering quality about them which can demonstrate to our urban minds how early European settlers considered themselves to be pioneers;
- 3. they are a valuable asset for Willoughby in that they have educational potential demonstrating early waterfront industry and demonstrating how that industry changed and faltered and how the authorities attempted to eradicate evidence of that industry in order to clean up the harbour foreshores.





Vincent Moran 958 0124

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Name:

Address:

Name:

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