

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

No. 107

Seventy two years of community development
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March/April 1996

OPTUS OVERHEAD CABLES IN CASTLECRAG

Optus Vision plans to install above-ground cables in Castlecrag this month.

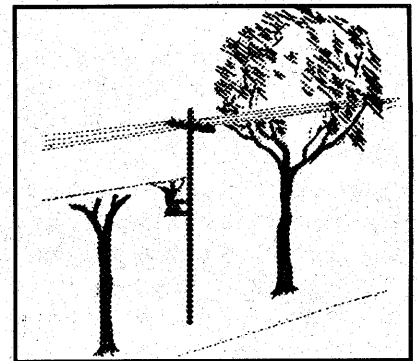
During the first week of April, Energy Australia undertook maintenance work on electricity poles under contract to Optus Vision, who intend to rollout their cable now, commencing in The Bulwark (a Conservation Area street) and Sunnyside Crescent.

Optus Vision states that the rollout will not involve Conservation Areas (see inset), but their maps to field operators do not show the listed areas in Castlecrag. Despite rallies on the 16 and 30 March against overhead cables and the submission of petitions and letters by Castlecrag residents stating they will not subscribe to pay-TV unless it is installed underground, the threat of overhead cabling is imminent. Optus Vision has also stated that they are not prepared to dismantle any existing cabling (*North Shore Times*, 3 April).

Residents fear a rush to erect overhead cables before any changes are made to regulations by the Federal Government.

What you can do

- Contact Mr. Patrick Southam, Manager, Public Affairs, Optus Vision — today — requesting them to honour their commitment not to erect cables in Conservation Areas and urge them to co-operate with Telstra to utilise existing underground conduits. **Fax Mr. Patrick Southam on 775 9000.** Phone is 775 9775.
- Contact Councillor Sue Randle for update on combined councils' actions in support of residents. Phone 9958 6344.
- Call in at 140 Edinburgh Road (Griffin house) today!! to sign the petition saying your household will not subscribe to Pay-TV unless it is installed underground.
- Report any signs of rollout, i.e. checking of poles, Energy Australia vehicles or Optus vehicles in the area to: A. Barnett, ph. 9958 6034 or K. McKillop, ph. 9958 4516.
- Be prepared to demonstrate when rollout begins. Refer to the diagram shown; the damage to our streetscape will be our loss.



'Optus is aware of the significance of the Castlecrag area, both in terms of its scenic quality and its heritage value. As you are aware, a large proportion of Castlecrag has been gazetted heritage by Willoughby Council, and at this stage it is not included in the Optus rollout program'.

*Patrick Southam, Optus Vision
to B. & K. Burke, 19 March 1996*

'Optus' policy in areas such as these is to have detailed discussions with your council ... I can assure you that this process is underway ... and no decision has been made to deploy the Optus network at this stage.

These discussions will canvass issues like the best way to build the network in areas such as Castlecrag, taking into account all relevant environmental issues'.

*Patrick Southam, Optus Vision
to A. Barnett, 25 March 1996*

Green Bans and the Urban Environment

Summary of an address by Jack Munday to the Castlecrag Progress Association Annual General Meeting, 31 March 1996 from notes by Kate Westoby.

Jack Munday is a well-known urban environmentalist and Chairman of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW. Given his long association with environment issues in Castlecrag, Jack was our guest speaker at the 1996 Annual General Meeting.

Jack Munday's involvement in the urban environment movement began in an era when councils had no control over urban development. Councils were essentially the domain of estate agents. The Green Bans came into being because there was no mechanism for ordinary people to have their say in urban issues, particularly matters affecting their quality of life. Some 150 resident action groups sprang up in the late sixties and early seventies as an expression of this frustration. As a last resort, they went to the unions for support.

Initially, the "environment" was seen in terms of "nature" and did not include the built urban environment. Kelly's Bush was the first protest of this nature. In this case, Hunters Hill matrons opposing destruction of well-preserved bushland for the building of project homes, had been rebuffed by the government so, as a last resort, they went to the unions. Munday insisted that the unions had an ecological and social responsibility and the BLF decided to support the women seeking to protect Kelly's Bush. After 25 years their remnant of bush is still there. Success in Hunters Hill ushered in similar requests from other groups to protect the environment. In this process, the Green Bans came to encompass both the built and the natural environment.

In today's consumer society our environment and quality of life is under increasing threat. Our cities are dominated by private vehicles and planning is dominated by economists who think in terms of growth and progress and do not take ecological issues into account. In response, communities are prepared to take grass-root action to protect their quality of life. This is a day-to-day democracy, not one where the involvement of citizens is to vote every three to four years. There are now over 100 organisations working to improve the urban environment of Sydney. The Castlecrag Progress Association is one such community group working to bring about a better urban environment.

While Castlecrag retains a balance between the natural and built environments, there will always be pressure for over development. We face many ecological crises from this development pressure and the dominance of the private car, but at least more people are thinking constructively about the issues.

The fight for ecological responsibility goes on and organisations such as the Castlecrag Progress Association have an important role to play. The BLF had supported the Association in its fight against the Warringah Expressway through Castlecrag through a Green Ban, but the bans were only effective because there was strong community support for the action. The combination of residents, unions and the environment had proven to be a very powerful force in Australia. On-going community action is required if the threats to our planet are to be overcome and our quality of life maintained.

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President's Annual Report

Ten kilometres from the heart of the great metropolis of Sydney lies this unique and beautiful bush suburb of Castlecrag. From the time of its inception by Walter and Marion Griffin, it has been blessed by a quite remarkable community spirit. "Together we Grow" was the motto of our former Infants' School and I very much hope that the same high ideal would guide this Progress Association.

At our last General Meeting we honoured Hilda Chapple by nominating her to Life Membership and another Life Member, Joyce Batterham, was our guest speaker. Her reflections on the early days in Castlecrag with the Griffins and her lifetime's active involvement in our suburb's progress made for a most interesting meeting. For oral history, do not go past Joyce!

Our membership during 1995 increased to almost 300 and led to well attended meetings. The overriding topic at these meetings has been the Foreshore Building Line. In an effort to protect the environment of Middle Harbour, Willoughby Council placed FBLs along various contour lines of its eastern waterways. Recently several residents made submissions to Council to have the FBL restrictions removed or downgraded in the Draft LEP65. This Association also made representation to Council on behalf of some of our members. Council decided to appoint consultants to review the aims and objectives of the FBL, assisted by a community-based committee.

The committee met six times and undertook field inspections of the FBLs which affect Castle Cove, Middle Cove, Castlecrag and Northbridge. A wide range of community views were expressed during the consultation process. The Consultant's Report will shortly go on public exhibition. It recommends that the FBL provisions remain in Willoughby City LEP 1995 and that Council undertake an educational campaign on the FBL for the benefit of residents.

Our ongoing program to establish indigenous flora in Castlecrag continued this year. Road widening and development at the entrance to our suburb destroyed much of the original planting established by Beverley Blacklock. The Association made representation to Council to have the plants replaced. Richard Blacklock, one of Beverley's sons, replanted the garden with, I am sure, her heavenly approval.

The task of reviewing our Constitution by a subcommittee was more demanding than anticipated. On behalf of the Association, I would like to thank Peter Meares, Nils Korner, Ray Neil, Tom Boyce and Gordon Shrubbs for their diligence and the expertise they brought to the endeavour.

Traffic issues have come to the fore in Castlecrag this year. The race track of Edinburgh Road, which has poor pedestrian facilities, and the parking problems around the Glenaeon School, have been major areas of concern. Our LATM committee has addressed the issues to Council in former years, but with little result. However, Council has called a public meeting of residents in February to discuss these traffic problems [see report page 4].

The Association has addressed a number of other issues during the year. We maintained our long tradition of support for the heritage value of the historic foreshore cottages on Sugarloaf Bay, supported other communities in their opposition to the destruction of bushland for roads and protested against the Optus overhead cabling.

Time has moved on in Castlecrag and it is no longer that visionary suburb its founders desired. Do Man and Nature still live in harmony here? I do believe that we should continue to address this issue and try to maintain the sense of community for which Castlecrag is justly famous. Our earliest residents saw the need for a Progress Association to protect them as together they grew and as, I hope, we grow today.

Elizabeth Lander, 31 March 1996

1996 C.P.A. Committee

The following executive and committee of the Castlecrag Progress Association was elected at the Annual General Meeting on 31 March 1996:

President: Elizabeth Lander (9958 5284)
Vice-President: Howard Rubie
Vice-President: Peter Meares
Secretary: Kate Westoby (9958 0215)
Treasurer: Diana Jones
Committee: Adele Barnett, Helen Levett,
 Kerry McKillop, Gay Spies,
 Harold Spies

Your Middle Harbour Ward Councillor is
 Sue Randle, Phone 9958 6344

Next meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association will be held on Tuesday 23 April at the Castlecrag Community Centre, 8pm

Traffic in Castlecrag: Public Meeting of 27 February

Traffic is a hot topic in Castlecrag. In response to the expansion of the Glenaeon Private School and its associated traffic problems - particularly the Land and Environment Court order of 18 January 1996 requiring Glenaeon to implement, at their cost, proposals from a LATM scheme for the area of works necessarily associated with the school - and long standing residents concerns about Edinburgh Road, Willoughby City Council initiated a public meeting to discuss the issues on 27 February 1996. Some 120 residents attended the public meeting to discuss proposals put forward by Council for Edinburgh Road traffic calming and Glenaeon school traffic issues. These proposals, circulated to all residents with the February issue of The Crag, included:

- a Wombat crossing opposite Glenaeon school;
- two raised thresholds on Edinburgh Road near Sunnyside Crescent, just before the St James church corner and at the children's playground;
- rumble blocks around the St James church corner; and
- construction on indented parking bays in Edith Street by the school or conversion of Edith Street to one-way traffic.

The circulated questionnaire to these proposals attracted 176 responses from residents. In summary, 67 per cent supported a Wombat crossing, 57 per cent the raised thresholds and 65 per cent the rumble blocks. In contrast, only 19 per cent were in favour of the indented parking bays in Edith Street and 37 per cent the one-way option.

The public meeting gave strong support for the traffic calming proposals, particularly the Wombat crossing, provided effective landscaping and a cycleway was incorporated into the scheme. However, there was individual opposition to a raised threshold at the children's playground.

Most residents of Edith Street attended and expressed deep concern that outsiders were seeking to change the nature of their neighbourhood. They were strongly opposed to the proposed indented parking bays and expressed a desire to retain the existing green nature strip and trees.

The meeting passed several motions on traffic issues and forwarded these to the Progress Association, which has endorsed them and forwarded the motions to Council. With respect to the Edith Street proposals, it was agreed that:

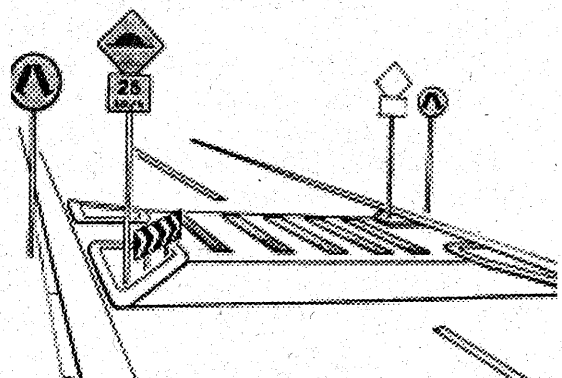
- no trees be removed from Edith Street;
- no parking bays be constructed in Edith Street;

- Edith Street not be converted to a one-way street;
- parking on the northern side of Edith Street be confined to resident parking 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- as a short-term solution for a trial period until the end of second term this year, parking on the southern side of Edith Street be confined to 5 minutes during school hours, subject to this being supported by a written undertaking from the school that this will be policed by them;
- in the interests of arriving at a long-term solution, the school should undertake to pay for a feasibility study relating to the construction of a driveway into the school from Edinburgh Road to enable parents to drop off their children within the school grounds with far greater safety and convenience than is available from any other solution.

Concerning traffic calming, it was agreed to support the proposed measures in Edinburgh Road, provided that further consideration is given to the siting of the school crossing, the provision of appropriate landscaping and the provision of a cycleway in the overall scheme. A supplementary motion was passed urging Council to initiate the Colin James Plan for re-aligning Edinburgh Road [see box], beginning with those sections which are most urgent, namely the Glenaeon school crossing, the corner near St James church and the children's park.

Wombat Crossings

Wombat crossings have been introduced by the Roads & Traffic Authority for the protection of children in school areas. They are similar to a speed hump with a zebra crossing across the threshold. A 40 kph speed restriction applies for 100 metres either side of the crossing.



To support the Castlecrag public meeting on traffic, Council conducted a traffic counts and speed surveys on Edinburgh Road over the period 6-12 February 1996. Three sites were surveyed corresponding to the proposed traffic calming measures: at Glenaeon school, near Sunnyside Crescent and the St James church corner, and at the children's park on the straight. Unfortunately, the results were not available for the meeting, but were forwarded to the Progress Association on 4 March. See table below:

SITE	SCHOOL	CHURCH	PARK
Eastbound vehicles per day	2,383	1,354	1,058
Westbound vehicles per day	2,636	1,492	1,112
% >60 kph eastbound	5.8	38.9	51.3
% > 70 kph eastbound	0.6	8.2	13.5
% >60 kph westbound	6.6	32.4	46.1
% >70 kph westbound	0.5	5.0	14.3

The traffic survey results provide dramatic endorsement of the concerns of residents about speeding on the eastern sections of Edinburgh Road. Council proposes that additional 60 kph signs be erected and that "community acceptable solutions" for slowing traffic be introduced.

Council also suggests that the response of residents to a 40 kph speed limit on all streets in Castlecrag be sought. However, it is noted that the NSW Government is likely to make a 50 kph speed limit mandatory for all residential streets within six months.

Castlecrag Sports Club Inc

invites young adults 18+ to play social tennis on Sundays 11.30-2pm commencing Sunday 5th May 1996. BBQ lunch provided.

Membership available

Enquiries 9958 6059 or 9958 1601

L. J. HOOKER CASTLECRAG

L.J. HOOKER CASTLECRAG team

Bronja, Richard, Graham

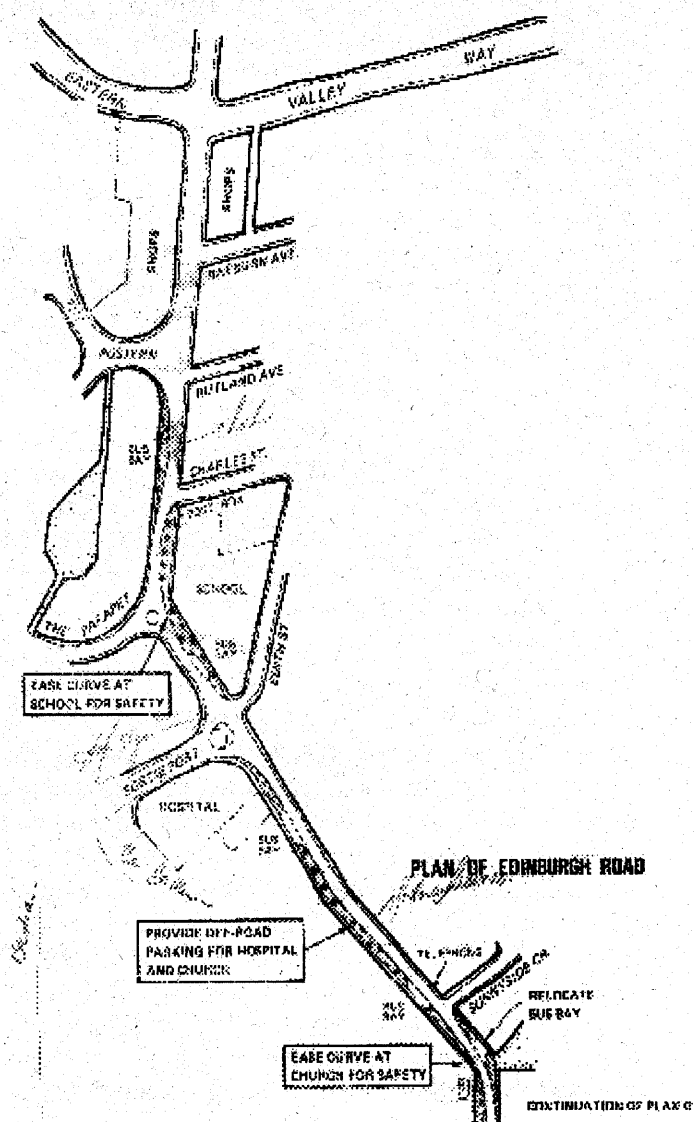
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A/H (02) 9969 4124**

Edinburgh Road: the Col James Plan

This detailed plan for the redesign of Edinburgh Road to traffic calming principles was prepared by a team from the School of Architecture, University of NSW for the Progress Association in July 1973. Landscaping features included:

- beautification of the street landscape in character of the Burley Griffin concept for Castlecrag;
- reduction of vehicle speed and noise by easing dangerous curves and curving straight sections, hence providing greater pedestrian safety;
- off-street visitor parking on lawn grids and bus bays;
- opportunity to remove overhead wires and poles by locating essential services underground;
- better road transition from Edinburgh Road to the arterial Eastern Valley Way.

Although it was recognised that the full scheme would be outside possible Council funding in the foreseeable future, the Plan provided a framework to the proposals developed by the Castlecrag LATM Committee in 1991-93 (The Crag, No. 106, p. 2).



With the Burley Griffins

by Louise Lightfoot who was a draftsman in their office for 7 years and lived at their home in Castlecrag. *Concluded from issue no.106.*

The Griffins were non-smokers and teetotallers, and so were we all. Waltie loved fun though he rarely had time for it: he was the last one to leave a Crag party. With a rather unattractive touch on the piano, Marion would struggle through Beethoven sonatas "so Waltie could get to know them better". In private we referred to him as the "little Cherub".

Marion was as volatile as Walter was reserved, looking after him as well as she knew how, offering him constant drinks of water - "have a swig" - reading to him and stitching his black bow-ties. I never knew him to be ill or see a doctor. In fact, sickness was almost like a disgrace, the general idea being "keep fit to do the work of the Creator".

Around this time, Louise became engrossed in her dancing and found it harder to get along with Marion. In 1928 she left the Griffin home and took up studying and producing ballet. There was little time left to visit the Crag [Ed.]

However, I did go to see the Greek drama presented in the Crag outdoor theatre in the bushland above Sailors Bay, and lit by the headlights of our car on the road above. Nothing could be more enchanting and imaginative. Waltie himself took a tiny part. He was the head of a dragon, winding down the slope, followed by seven others who formed the body. He took a wrong turn and the dragon was untimely decapitated.

I produced my final ballet, Le Dieu Bleu, and leaving our most talented student to carry on with Misha, I sailed for India to find Kathakali. The next seven years were spent studying this great art and touring India and Ceylon with native troupes.

When I returned to Australia to present Indian dancing for the first time in my country, I heard the sad news of Mr Griffin's death - strangely enough in India where I had some commitments. I went out to the Crag to visit Marion. I walked through the open door of No. 17 The Parapet and saw Marion lying on her couch. Her eyes were closed. After a while she opened them and recognised me. "I was trying to contact Waltie's spirit" were the first words she said. Old scores were forgotten and we talked freely. I asked "Do you ever do any drafting these days?" She replied "I never want to hold a pencil again". I asked "How was it Waltie did not come through his operation in India? "A fall he once had at the Crag came against him" she replied.

Some years later I heard that Marion had returned to her relatives in Chicago. I knew her niece was Clarmira Smith; so when I was passing through Chicago on the way to the University of Illinois with my favourite Kathakali dancer, Shivaram and his wife and little girl, we spent an hour phoning various Smiths till at last we found the correct address and calculated we had time to go there.

We knocked on the door of an ordinary suburban house and Marion gave the same old welcome: "Come right in!" She looked so old but was quite gay, though wearing the colours she most disliked - a faded helio dressing gown and grey silk stockings trailing down her legs. There were sounds of children crying in the next room and Marion called out "No crying, my darlings! Only happiness in this house!" She then explained she was looking after the children of her niece who was teaching during the day.

"How do you feel these days!" I asked. "Fine and dandy! They can't kill me, I'm a vegetarian" she responded. "Where are all your treasures - those lovely banners and the Japanese prints?" "I don't know. I can't remember what I did one minute ago. Oh..." and she laughed her old mirthless laugh. The she added "Waltie was mean. He went away and left me too soon."

Marion passed away a few years later. I remember the title of the first subject for discussion by the cultural group at the Crag - "Does the Ego persist and whither goes it?" Marion may know now. I imagine that these two spirits united like drops of water in the cosmic ocean where egos persist. ■

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3 The Postern Castlecrag

A Treasure Hunt Down in the Valley

story by Claire Diamond

On the third of December 1995, I had a treasure hunt Birthday Party down in the valley. I was turning ten years old so I decided to invite quite a few people. Half way through the party, we went down in groups to the valley. Each person went with a plastic bag (most of my friends were there, so you can imagine how many people that would be). Anyway, we first went down there and looked for a treasure box full of lolly snakes, then Dad said: Now, everyone, the person who finds the most rubbish wins a prize! We started to fill our plastic bags with bottles, cans, and any rubbish we could find. So obviously, everyone started to move and ran in every direction, picking up rubbish. When it was time to go back up to the house, the valley looked spotless. My team did not win, but still we thought it was fun! Everyone went home and we were left with quite a lot of rubbish at the house, but Dad said The great thing is that the valley now looks clean and your friends will know not to throw rubbish in the valley any more.

If you are thinking of having a party down in the valley, it's a great idea to get down there with a bag.

Claire Diamond, Sunnyside Crescent

Willoughby City Council Column
February/March

Premier's Award

Congratulations to Neville Milston on his receipt of a Premier's Award for Services to the Community. The Mayor, Eunice Raymond, presented Neville with his award in March.

Bushland Management

Bushland Management policies, action plans and resources inventories have been submitted for Willoughby City. The action plans cover each bushland reserve and contain performance measures for their ongoing management.

Waste Management

Under the *Waste Minimisation and Management Act 1995*, local government councils are to form 'waste regions'. Willoughby will participate in the Northern Suburbs Regional Organisation. Tenders for the Northern Region Waste Management Plan closed on 1 March 1996. Willoughby has endorsed the state target to reduce waste by 60%. Willoughby's new waste system has been nominated for the 1996 National Awards for Innovation in Local Government. The draft Waste Management DCP will require building and development applications involving demolition work to include a Waste Management Plan.

Castlecrag Foreshore Cottages

Council has adopted the recommendations of the *Conservation Plan: Waterfront Cottages, Castlecrag* and has called for nominees for a Task Team to consider the funding arrangements for the cottages.

Development Applications

Recent DA approvals for Castlecrag have been:

- 38 The Battlement: alterations and additions
- 108 The Bulwark: alterations and additions

- 120 Eastern Valley Way, dual occupancy (Land & Environment Court appeal with conditions)
- 14 The Scarp: detached dual occupancy
- 4 The Barbette: modification of approval conditions to dwelling house
- 42 The Parapet: alteration and additions (with pool deleted)
- 5 The Scarp: amended dwelling design (with bond to ensure longevity of trees onsite)

The following DA was deferred for compliance with DCP3: 27 Linden Way: alterations and additions.

Plan of Management

Meredith Walker, A Heritage Planning Consultant, is preparing a Plan of Management for the Griffin reserves. The consultant spent a weekend meeting with residents at the various reserves. The Local Government Act requires of all Councils that Plans of Management for parks, reserves, etc. be completed by June 1996.

Heritage Week 27 April - 6 May

Heritage Week activities in Willoughby include heritage awards, production of a heritage streetscape video and Trade Fair at the Civic Centre on 26-27 April. Seven heritage homes in Willoughby will be open in the week from 27 May. For further enquiries re open houses telephone Carol Russell, Willoughby Library: 777 7900 or Cr. Mary-Jane Morgan on 419 3444.

- On Saturday 27 April the Trade Fair will be officially opened by the Mayor, and Guest, Jack Munday.
- On Sunday 28 April there will be an Environmental Heritage Walk to Flat Rock. Alfred Bernhard will lead the circular walk from 10-1pm.
- On Thursday 2 May there will be an evening of talks by Environmental Consultant, Meredith Walker, on 'New Ways of Keeping Interiors' and Art Deco consultant, Mary Nilsson, on 'Art Deco Interiors', at the Willoughby Town Hall.

Application for Membership/Renewal of Membership

Membership fee is \$5 per person (\$3 for students and those on a fixed income). Membership is for the calendar year and is renewable from 1 January 1996. Members must be at least 18 years of age.

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Our Constitution stipulates that a member of the Association must be a natural person who is a resident or ratepayer of the area (designated in Rule 1.3) being over the age of 18 years and has been approved for membership of the Association by the Committee. Two months membership is obligatory for a member to be eligible to vote, but since approval by the Committee usually occurs one month after receipt of application for membership, voting eligibility usually takes three months. The names of the people applying for membership should be supplied with the membership fee. Membership fee is for the calendar year. A person who was a member in 1995 will automatically be eligible to vote in 1996 as soon as the 1996 membership is paid (as long as the 2 or 3 months qualifying period has elapsed). A 'family' cannot be a member because a 'family' is not a real person. If a company owns a property in Castlecrag, then the directors of the company do not qualify for membership of the Association if they live outside Castlecrag.