

CASTLECrag

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECrag PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

No. 110

Seventy two years of community development

October/November 1996

ISSN 0814 - 2054



CASTLECrag SAYS 'no' TO OPTUS

At a public meeting on the 4 September, a capacity crowd of CastleCrag residents vowed not to subscribe to Optus services until the cables are laid underground.

The *Cables Underground* meeting organised by the CastleCrag Progress Association saw the residents condemn Optus for its lack of community consultation and continued installation of overhead cables — regardless of environmental impact or community opposition. The meeting, chaired by our Mayor, Eunice Raymond, heard speakers from the CastleCrag *Wires Below Ground* committee, Willoughby City Council, Telstra and other community groups.

Willoughby Council General Manager, Michael Beilby, stated that in Council's view, there had been a deliberate attempt by Optus to obscure their intention. They had delivered large stacks of documentation to Council without clear advice on the key elements of the proposals. In the case of CastleCrag, Council held that they had not received the critical 'Node 95' map, describing plans for rollout. Council had considered legal action to stop the rollout, but all that could be achieved was to delay action for a further 30 days.

Speaking for the *Wires Below Ground* committee, Howard Rubie, Peter Meares and John Howard outlined the progress of investigations into the undergrounding of all cables in CastleCrag. This would involve significant costs, but with community support, these could be covered by a surcharge on services. Regarding the Optus rollout, the real problem lies with politicians in Canberra who have brought in legislation which overrides local government and community concerns. In Western Australia, the state government is taking a strong stand against overhead cables.

In NSW, the most powerful responses are community boycotts of overhead cable providers and support for

alternative approaches. The Mayor of Pittwater was very outspoken in his criticism of the Federal Government (both Labor and Coalition) for allowing the present situation to develop.

Telstra representatives addressed the meeting and fielded questions. They emphasised that Telstra has traditionally been an underground service provider and this remained its preference, but the cost advantage given to Optus for overhead cabling was forcing Telstra to do likewise. They promised that if CastleCrag successfully stops/removes Overhead cabling, Telstra will go underground and for the CastleCrag Conservation Area, Telstra will make a written commitment to provide underground cabling. It was noted that the cost of undergrounding cables is coming down relative to overhead installations, so that costs for co-construction by two or more service providers (ie. Telstra and Optus) are becoming comparable with overhead options. Therefore, if Optus agrees to co-construction underground, then overhead cabling would be avoided or removed.

The meeting resolved, with only one exception, to urge residents not to sign up with Optus services until they remove existing overhead cables and go underground. There was also a call for the CastleCrag *Wires Below Ground* committee to liaise with Pittwater and Manly movements on a regional campaign for undergrounding cables.

Telstra also advised that they would soon be meeting with the Local Government Association at a national level to discuss issues relating to cable rollout. Following this meeting, the Local Government Conference in Canberra adopted a motion calling on the Federal Government to stop the Optus overhead cable rollout and force telecommunication carriers to go underground. The issue has taken on national significance and more radical action by councils, such as the impounding of Optus trucks, can be expected over the coming months.
(Editorial)

A Current Debate:

Should the Castlecrag Progress Association answer Council's routine notification of Development Applications (DAs) to comment on those it considers unsympathetic to Castlecrag?

The CPA rarely makes objections; all but a few DAs are routinely assessed for approval or objection only by immediate neighbours before being tabled at Council.

However, occasionally a DA is proposed which members of the CPA are concerned about because of its potential to provide ongoing problems to its environment, heritage or location. Then it may propose a motion to comment to Council, on whichever of the above grounds cause concern. Such a letter will be only considered by Council with the same status accorded to objecting neighbours — no more or less.

A debate was raised at the last CPA general meeting as to whether the CPA should answer any notification of Development Applications. The main question appeared to be whether the CPA was 'qualified' to comment on any DA proposed.

We present excerpts from two letters as opposing sides to the DA comment debate: Nils Korner (from his letter to *The Crag* editors of 26/9/96) answers **against**, and Bob McKillop (from his letter to Elizabeth Lander of 4/9/96) answers **for** the case.

NILS KORNER — AGAINST

"At the general meeting on 27 August 1996, the CPA resolved by 17 votes to 15 that "the CPA objects to the DA for 83A Sugarloaf Crescent, in that the development would be detrimental to the adjacent reserve and walking track, and to the habitat".

"The overwhelming majority of the members voting had no first-hand knowledge of the DA, had not seen the site, the plans, the reports or the submission of the owners, (who were not given an opportunity to comment). I am included in this majority and have no opinion on the DA because I know nothing about it; but the meeting rejected the proposition that it was impossible to produce an equitable assessment without knowledge of the details and over the procedural objection of a large majority proceeded to an immediate vote. Under these circumstances, I regard the passage of this resolution by the CPA as reprehensible and have urged the Council to reject it as such."

"It is no doubt desirable that Council should *notify* the public and Progress Associations of DAs, but neither the committee nor the members of progress associations are in a position to accurately inform themselves about details of every DA in a two week period though they may be able to do this in cases of particular significance."

"I therefore suggest that it is inappropriate for Council to request progress associations to perform as a routine task which they manifestly cannot fulfill. It is irresponsible of the progress associations to attempt to do so."

BOB MCKILLOP — FOR

"As a former committee member who assisted with CPA responses to Council on DA matters and worked to ensure that these contributions were of a high professional standard, I disagree with assertions about the capability of the Progress Association to make constructive interventions.

It is Council policy to copy DAs to progress associations because they are seen as the local-level institutions with the capacity to comment from a wider community perspective. The credibility of progress associations in responding to relevant DAs depends largely on their ability to assess the potential impact of proposals in the wider public interest.

Given my 20 years' experience in advising governments and international agencies on development impacts, including the last two as team leader to establish a world-class environmental regulatory framework, I consider myself well-qualified to assist the Progress Association to assess development proposals.

Moreover, the Castlecrag Progress Association has demonstrated an outstanding capacity to mobilise professional expertise from a range of disciplines, to comment on individual DAs from a public interest perspective.

Editors' Postscript: Property owners have always received a copy of letters commenting on their DAs to Council.



MORAN
REALTY

9958 0124

14/100 Edinburgh Road,
Castlecrag NSW 1068

FOR PROPERTY SALES
and RENTALS
AUCTIONS or MANAGEMENT

'We succeed because we care'

Call Vincent, David, Joanne or Jim

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION in local government

How would you prefer your community issues to be represented to local government? Traditionally, it is through your local progress association, but an alternative is the 'precinct committee'. What is the difference?

The Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations is currently reviewing the process of community participation in local government; specifically the role of progress associations vs precinct committees. Cr. Martin Bass, the Precinct Manager of North Sydney Council, spoke to the June meeting, and Cr. Rod Tudge, Mayor of Lane Cove, presented the case for progress associations at the August meeting.

North Sydney introduced the precinct system of community-based representation in 1970, but closed the groups in 1976. The present system was re-introduced in 1981. There are 25 precinct committees, of which 21 are 'active'. Each covers about 1,000 households. The system has been created by Council to raise the profile of local groups. The intention was to provide a participatory mechanism.

The committees must run according to Council's guidelines. In practice, representation has been a difficult hurdle to overcome and North Sydney Council acknowledges that there is a low level of participation in most precinct committees.

Progress associations have emerged from local communities to give voice to their concerns, often as a response to an issue of specific concern to that community. Lane Cove has 9 progress associations for about 10,000 households (ie, a similar ratio to North Sydney precincts). They maintain a strong autonomy from council, although there are significant opportunities for close co-operation.

The presentations given to the meetings highlighted the important role of progress associations as a vehicle for community involvement in the democratic process, particularly where they have a long tradition (such as Lane Cove and Willoughby). They cover a wide range of issues of concern to residents, including those which lie outside the powers of an individual council (eg., regional traffic flows, public transport).

Progress associations provide councils with a ready-made community structure which helps them work through local problems. In contrast with precinct committees, progress associations remain independent of council. If necessary, council, with progress association support, can call a street meeting on a specific issue which affects residents who are not association members. The precinct system is a more council-oriented approach which may provide a power-base for individual councillors, and represent a trend toward an institutionalised political system.

The precinct agenda is confined to council matters and they tend to serve primarily as a mechanism for discussing development applications.

While there have been criticisms of progress associations as not being sufficiently representative, the precinct system in North Sydney has not demonstrated any significant improvement in this dimension.


The Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations recognises the need to improve community democracy in the City. Lane Cove provides some useful lessons. Council offers strong support to progress associations, with the majority of councillors attending meetings of each association. Several associations have developed a strong revenue base from activities such as the hire of tennis courts (provided by council and managed by the progress association), and local fund-raising activities.

The Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations is seeking responses from member associations on the issue of community involvement in local government. If you would like to contribute, please come to the October meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Written by Bob McKillop in response to request a from the last CPA meeting to explain the differences.

LOOK

NOW OPEN



THE
DOWNUNDER
RESTAURANT

TRADING HOURS
6 Days 5pm 'til late
Closed Monday

9967 3900

FREE HOME DELIVERY

6 The Griffin Centre, 122-126 Edinburgh Rd, Castlecrag.
Next door to Castlecrag Cellars

FAMILY DINING
B.Y.O.
PIZZA AND STEAK

Bookings essential

Joan McPherson

It is with great regret that we note the recent and unexpected death of one of our members, Joan McPherson. Joan met her husband Lin while they were both in the army, and with their daughter Sue, came to live, in the early 1950s, in the then remote and undeveloped bush suburb of Castlecrag.

Their daughter, Lindy was born a few years later and the McPherson family, through its natural energy, became well known in our community — Lin becoming a president of our Association.

Joan had a great artistic talent and among other avenues, this manifested itself to a high degree of competence, in pottery. Every December, Joan held a pottery show and sale at her home. These were

extremely popular and were always 'sold out' occasions. Many residents who own pieces of Joan's pottery will have her memory brought to mind every time they use or display her beautiful vases or tableware.

So well was Joan regarded that for six consecutive years, her peers honoured her by electing her to the position of president of the prestigious Potters Society. She was a devoted and caring wife, mother, grandmother and neighbour, and a person who appreciated and responded to the community life Castlecrag offers. The Progress Association sends its condolences to Joan's family as, I am sure, we join them in remembering the pleasure her company gave.

Elizabeth Lander

Electronic Office Equipment

For a full range of calculators for school or office Word Processors, Filing, Faxes & Office Furniture

**CONTACT 'TERRY TILTINS' on 9958 1733
AT MICROELECTRONIC (AUST.) Pty. Ltd.**

Service also available on all types of equipment



3 The Postern, Castlecrag NSW 2068

Richardson & Wrench Castlecrag 9958 1200

81 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag, 2068

YOUR PREMIER AGENT

Castlecrag — Middle Cove — Castle Cove

Are you interested to know

- How much your property is worth?
- How long it would take to sell?
- How much would it cost?
- Is there market demand for your property?

If so, contact our office today for Real Estate advice from agents who really know your area and get results.

IT COSTS NO MORE FOR THE BEST

Providing excellence in Real Estate Service

Combined over 20 years Real Estate experience

Mark O'Brien — Manager

John Gallagher — Licensed Agent & Auctioneer

COLUMN 2

- We congratulate Mayor Eunice Raymond, of Northbridge Ward, who has for the second time been elected Mayor of Willoughby City Council. Cr Tony Mustaca is the new Deputy Mayor. We wish them well in this term of office.
- It is good to see local eateries providing special areas for children, where space permits, allowing parents to have a relaxing bite while the children entertain themselves close by. The *Castlecrag Delicatessen* was first to provide one, and the newly opened *Downunder Restaurant* has a special enclave where children can have their own table and play area. One family often travels from Frenchs Forest to take advantage of the 'kid zones'.
- **The LATM Committee** (*Local Area Traffic Mgmt.*) has drawn up proposals for minor traffic calming in Edinburgh Road, which are on display on the community noticeboard outside the Griffin Centre, for public inspection and comments (by 31/10/ please).
- **The Society for Growing Australian Plants** has a wealth of knowledge amongst its members, some of whom have 40 years' experience — long before Australian plants became 'fashionable'. Experienced gardeners are eager to pass down their knowledge of plants to people who are interested in 'Australian' gardening. If you would like to find out more about SGAP, phone Helen Levett on 9958 3510.

COMMUNITY BYTES

CASTLECrag CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Local vocals wanted for one gig on the 24 December! Patricia Sheldon, organiser of the annual Christmas Carols held at the Haven Amphitheatre, is asking for ladies and gentlemen to be part of a special choir she will include in the festivities.

If you love to sing — (all vocal ranges welcome) and would like to be part of this year's carol celebration, phone Patricia Sheldon on 9958 5782 for details.

Community Group Reports

CASTLECrag CONSERVATION SOCIETY

- The CCS continues opposition to Optus overhead cables, lobbying and monitoring cabling activity with other area groups.
- CCS will again hold its 'Bush Weed Information' stall at Willoughby Community Fair on October 19.
- CCS held a Sunday morning general meeting at the Haven Amphitheatre on 22 September, with morning tea and an inspection of Sean Lander's house and bushland following the meeting. On a beautiful Spring day, the Haven environs were much enjoyed by the members attending.
- CCS is planning a Native Garden and Streetscape inspection day in August/September 1997. Residents who would like to 'open' their garden on this day are invited to phone Harold Spies on 9958 8569.
- CCS is opposing any further privatisation and development in Kosciusko National Park.
 - It also supports the Coalition for Gun Control.
 - We will be sending delegates to the 1996 Nature Conservation Council's Annual Conference.

CONGRATULATIONS 'Crag SNOW STARS

Nick Bennett has been selected for the Australian Junior Snowboard Team to compete in Japan in 1997. Nick is ranked 30th in the world overall.

Emma Crew is a member of the North Sydney Girls' High School ski team which recently won the Inter-schools Ski Competition: Division 2, Snowboarding (Girls'). Emma also won the Individual Medal for the fastest time recorded.

Anyone who has ever struggled down a scary slope can appreciate your achievement. Excellent!

WILLOUGHBY FAIR: SAT. 19 OCTOBER 1996

It is not too late to donate your unwanted what-nots to Castlecrag Progress Association's *Trash and Treasure Stall*. We haven't got enough of either! Donations: please phone Elizabeth Lander on 9958 5384.

WEPA

(Willoughby Environmental Protection Association)

At the last meeting, WEPA advised of its September talk on Platypus in the Greater Sydney region, its walks to Katandia Bushland Sanctuary, a Flat Rock Gully walk in November and its stall at the Willoughby Community Fair, where it will be selling native plants and cut flowers. *Orders can still be placed for plants and flowers (Tel. 9958 5978).*

THE HAVEN AMPHITHEATRE

The Haven Amphitheatre committee invites Castlecrag community groups to make use of the space for meetings and picnics, etc. The installation of water, electricity and toilet facilities now make the Haven a more easily-organised venue for 'passive' use. The amphitheatre is a beautiful place to spend time. *Enquiries: phone Adele Barnett on 9958 6034.*



MOMO Interiors
 79 Edinburgh Road
 Castlecrag 2068
 9958 6672 Fax: 9958 2465 9958 8372

COLOUR AND DESIGN CONSULTANTS
 FOR INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR
 Member of the Society of
 Interior Designers of Australia

CASTLECrag MEATS

—Award Winning Butchers—

Specialists in trim lamb cuts, hams, turkeys and all your special requirements

Free home delivery Tuesdays & Fridays
 * * * * *

Corner Raeburn Avenue and Edinburgh Road
Telephone orders 9958 4274

NEW CRAG BUS SERVICE: ROUTE 275

Route 275 has recently begun to operate from The Pinnacle terminus in Edinburgh Road, to Chatswood.

For the benefit of cross-suburb passengers, we print the following information:

ROUTE: Route 275 starts at The Pinnacle, moving along Edinburgh Road to the traffic lights, turning right into Eastern Valley Way, turning right into Greenfield Avenue and running along Rembrandt Drive, Middle Cove in a loop, to return to Eastern Valley Way. It then travels up Victoria Avenue to the Willoughby Retirement Centre and along High Street Willoughby to travel up Victoria Avenue to the Chatswood bus interchange.

MONDAY TO FRIDAY: Leaves The Pinnacle every hour on the quarter past: from 9.15am to 2.15pm.

Returns to The Pinnacle every hour at forty two minutes past the hour: 9.42am to 2.42pm.

SATURDAYS: Leaves The Pinnacle every two hours: 7.15am, 11.15am, 1.15pm, 3.15pm and 5.15pm.

Returns to the Pinnacle: 7.42am, 9.42am, 11.42am, 1.42pm, 3.42pm and 5.42pm.

NO SUNDAY OR PUBLIC HOLIDAY SERVICE.

This is a welcome service and the first time we have had an Edinburgh Road route linked with Chatswood: to keep the service, we need to use it!

The next meeting of the Castlecrag Progress Association will be on Tuesday 22nd October 1996, 8pm, at the Community Centre, The Postern, Castlecrag.

AUSTRALIA POST CASTLECrag

SHOP 17 THE QUADRANGLE SHOPPING VILLAGE
100 EDINBURGH ROAD, CASTLECrag

TEL. (02) 9958 8650 FAX. (02) 9958 6909

You can pay your Telstra, Sydney Water, Tax, AGC, Housing Commission, Citibank and many other bills at our office.

Other customer services that we supply in addition to stamps and packaging etc. are a FREE parcel strapping service, photocopying, fax facilities, document binding and labelling service.

Private letter boxes available • Green Slips • Express Post Parcel Service: You can now send parcels to 20kg over the Express Post Network.

OFFICE HOURS

9.00 - 5.30 Mon. Tues. Wed. Friday
9.00 - 6.00 Thursday & 9.00 - Noon Saturday
UNDERCOVER CAR PARKING

L.J. HOOKER CASTLECrag

L. J. HOOKER CASTLECrag TEAM

Bronja, Richard, Graham

91 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag NSW 2068

Tel: (02) 9958 1800 Fax: (02) 9958 6063

A.H. (02) 9969 4124

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.

Name: _____ \$	Signature: _____
Name: _____ \$	Signature: _____
Name: _____ \$	Signature: _____
Address: _____	Donation: _____ \$

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.