

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

No. 115

Seventy two years of community development
ISSN 0814 - 2054



July/August 1997

Our Reserves & Walkways PLAN of MANAGEMENT

There are the short-cuts which everyone uses, the road islands which everyone drives around and the bushland reserves, many of which have regressed into disuse or misuse... but all of these are part of the original Griffin plan for open space, which create the special element within Castlecrag.

The condition and management of Griffin Reserves and Walkways has been subjected to an intensive study over the last year by consultants Walker & Lehany, commissioned by Willoughby City Council (under the Local Government Act) to provide a draft Plan of Management (PoM). Their Draft PoM has subsequently been examined by the Castlecrag Progress Association and the Castlecrag Conservation Society, both of which have recently presented their comments to Council.

So what is the PoM all about? To begin with, the draft PoM (which *The Crag* earlier stated was available for reading at the library, among other places) included recommendations for the upgrading and/or maintenance of every walkway, reserve and island. Many residents will remember meeting Meredith Walker and Michael Lehany as they spent a weekend last year walking around every part of the system, discussing each area with locals.

Since the preservation and maintenance of the Griffin Legacy has been of central concern to the CPA from its formation in 1925, we regard an effective PoM as an activity of *fundamental importance* to the Castlecrag community. Our PoM public meeting showed that some residents had problems with aspects of the consultants' draft.

Much of the dissatisfaction from residents is based on a perception that Council has not adequately met its responsibilities to maintain the system. Points raised include the lack of clear definition of maintenance responsibility, inadequate Council funding and blockage of walkways by rubbish and other forms of encroachment

The public meeting moved to support in general the draft Plan of Management for the Griffin Reserves, Walkways and Islands and to seek Council's support both *financially and in principle*, to implement this PoM, with notations and addendum appended.

Current Situation

The PoM is an important database on the current status of each reserve, walkway and island. The consultant highlights the poor condition of the Griffin reserves, with the practicalities of maintenance at the core of this problem.

A specific topic of confusion is the legal status of the walkways because some residents have held an understanding that those walkways marked 'drainage easements' are not *public walkways*. Others made claims that the 1940 *Deed of Trust* (the document by which Griffin's Greater Sydney Development Association handed over trusteeship to Willoughby) maintains a higher interest in the reserves for adjoining residents than is the case for other parks in Willoughby City. We are unable to identify such an intention and note that access to the trust lands is specifically open to 'all persons'.

The purpose of the reserve and walkway system was to provide a system of open space for:

- pedestrian access through the estates, especially from/ to Edinburgh Road and the foreshore;
- local small parks for recreation;
- access to continuous foreshore reserve and lookouts.

Our public meeting reinforced the ongoing importance of this purpose, particularly its role in providing pedestrian access. More residents are now walking to maintain health than in recent decades and, given the lack of footpaths in much of Castlecrag, there is renewed interest in the Griffin walkway system for this purpose. It was noted at the public meeting that the walkway system allows safe and useful short-cuts for pedestrians, particularly children.

Reserve Management Strategy

The draft report states that priorities and targets should be set for implementing the PoM. The *Embrasure* and *Gargoyle* Reserves (linking The Bulwark, The Bastion and The Battlement), stand out as priority areas for rehabilitation and improved access. Our responses from residents show a strong desire for prioritisation for an integrated system of pedestrian walkways. Some upgrading of walkways and reserves (eg, *Oriel*) and ongoing maintenance is needed.

Access to the foreshore from Edinburgh Road needs to be re-opened, but should not compete with or undermine the role of the reserves as flora and fauna conservation areas.

A concern raised by some residents is the technical soundness of the PoM report. They note that while the report demonstrates expertise from a landscape architecture perspective, it is relatively weak in the management of natural areas.

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Our Reserves & Walkways

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GRIFFIN'S GIFT TO CASTLECRAG

from an address given by
PROFESSOR JAMES WEIRICK

Professor of Landscape Architecture
The University of NSW,

to the Castlecrag Conservation Society, July 1997

Community involvement

Proposed actions under the draft PoM rest on an assessment that the community lacks an inherent understanding of the significance of the Griffin open space system and reserve care techniques. Our public meeting generally supported this view, with several speakers expressing concern that inappropriate bush regeneration techniques used by well-meaning residents may cause considerable damage. Several useful suggestions regarding public education and awareness have been put forward.

Residents also expressed an expectation that effective management of the reserves will require a partnership between Council and residents. However, there is scepticism that the 'track record' is a poor one to date, while the mechanisms proposed in the draft PoM for community involvement are seen as vague and ill-defined.

There is a need for leadership and direction from technically competent people to establish and implement sound management regimes.

Management of the Reserve System

The consultant proposes that maintenance needs can be reduced through the establishment of more natural vegetation regimes which require less maintenance than the introduced regimes. The draft PoM also states that remnant bushland in Castlecrag is not self-regulating and requires regular maintenance with the same diligence and patience as required for regular garden maintenance, so the report demonstrates technical weakness and lack of consistency in this area.

Another shortcoming of the report is the lack of identification and costing of the resources required for maintenance. If the community is to make contributions to the draft Plan of Management, then we need to know what resources are needed for its implementation.

Fences

The construction of substantial fences has become a controversial issue in Castlecrag over recent years. While some people claimed that community values have changed since Griffin's time and now demand more privacy, there has generally been strong support for the draft PoM objective 'to minimise the impact of fences on the landscape and natural character of the Griffin estates.' It was felt that Council should be more rigorous in maintaining its 'no fence policy' and, only where appropriate should 'invisible fences' be supported.

Encroachments

Encroachment of public land is one of the most sensitive areas in Castlecrag. Lack of prompt attention by Council to identify and actively discourage encroachments in the past has raised their proliferation. Encroachment is also a function of perceived Council inaction in providing effective maintenance of the reserves. Tackling encroachment needs to be an integral part of an effective program for rehabilitation and improved access.

An aerial photo of Sydney Harbour shows an expanse of highly developed suburbs, fringed here and there with some surviving bushland on the waterfront. There is only one suburb where there is a fusion of bushland and development. This is Castlecrag, with its interlinked system of urban bushland reserves.

Walter Burley Griffin created this protected network of open spaces - which for the time was innovative and radically different from other suburbs. Griffin's great design for Castlecrag, carried out by the Greater Sydney Development Association (GSDA) and other syndicates he had formed, came to a halt in the Depression of the 1930s. But by that time he had put in place a comprehensive environmental plan.

One of the major influences on Walter Griffin and Marion Mahony in their native Chicago during the 1890s to World War 1, had been the new science of ecology, centred at the University of Chicago, where Henry C Cowles founded the study of physiographic ecology. (Interestingly, Cowles' work later influenced the significant research in the 1930s by Dr Ilma Pidgeon on patterns of vegetation associations on the Hawkesbury sandstone in the Sydney region).

Environmental idealism and the understanding of regional landscapes formed the basis of Griffin's practice in landscape architecture. In Chicago, he designed subdivisions sharing open space in the form of internal parks — radical at the time.

When the Griffins created the Castlecrag Estate, one of the main aims was to conserve the significant landscape resources of this sandstone peninsula and to keep intact the existing forest canopy, by creating a continuous system of 'forest preserves' extending from the ridge to the harbour foreshores. No other development company in the history of this city has ever given such a fantastic gift to future residents: interlocked open spaces and over four miles of almost continuous open space along the foreshore.

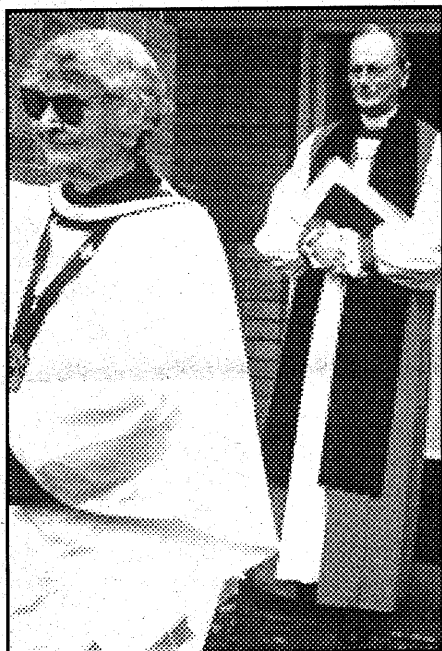
Five principles were involved in the Griffin plan. The first principle was to conserve the significant natural assets of the site — the stream corridors, rock outcrops, major cliff lines, major stands of vegetation, the entire waterfront — in a series of reserves. The second principle was to use the reserves to provide direct pedestrian pathways down the contours to complement the roads winding around the slopes.

The third principle was to site the houses as inter-related incidents in the bush, designed in harmony with the aesthetic qualities of the trees and rocks, with each room in each house having natural bushland views, and many with framed and filtered water views.

The fourth principle was to provide opportunities for recreational activities: picnics, walking, children's play, community theatre.

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50th anniversary celebration of Anglican services in Castlecrag



The Archbishop of Sydney, Harry Goodhew and Deaconess Dorothy Bransgrove lead the procession from St. James after the 50th Anniversary service

Held at St. James Church on the 27 June, the service attracted a capacity attendance of past and present congregation to celebrate 50 years of Anglican services in Castlecrag, from 1947. Those who could not fit inside participated from a marquee on the front lawn via closed circuit video.

Conducted by the Rev. Jason Page, with Deaconess Dorothy Bransgrove, the special guest was the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Reverend Harry Goodhew, who delivered a thanksgiving address that was contemporary and relevant, with analogies from the work of Nelson Mandela.

Mrs. Dorothy O'Connor spoke of the beginnings of the local church in her lounge room, sharing some memories and humorous anecdotes, and Mrs. Edie Le Mesurier said an eloquent and heartfelt community prayer. Former Rectors, Rev. David Tyndall and Rev. John Griffiths, gave the Bible readings.

There was the Shore Chapel Choir to lead the hymns, a fully-kitted bagpiper to pipe the procession from the church and an air of anticipation among former 'Castlecrag kids' who had returned for the service and spied many familiar faces. Over morning tea, reunions were made, phone numbers swapped and memories encapsulated by young, middle aged and old.

The success of the celebration was largely due to the efforts of those church members too numerous to mention, who over the years have made the cakes, stacked the chairs, arranged the flowers, cleaned, administered and organisedand on this day did it all again. It is people like these who make community events successful and worth the doing, because of their faith, their belief in friendship and the benefits of a good community spirit. (Ed.)

HOW THE CHURCH WAS BUILT... a brief history

Those who worship at St James are conscious of a wonderful warmth in our fellowship, characteristic of a family built on a foundation of love and faith. Fifty years ago Castlecrag as a developing centre, had a high percentage of young families, but no Anglican church or centre for Christian teaching.

Dorothy and Jack O'Connor held Anglican services in their home from July 1947, beginning with 16 people, for 7 years. Dorothy recruited a new arrival, William Ostling, to open a Sunday School in November 1947 with 7 children in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hill. By the following April it was 35 and by June it was 90, with 5 teachers and an organ. Weather permitting, half the classes were set outside. The senior class was held in the laundry, with the favoured seats being on a plank over the washtubs. At one time, a boy sitting on the copper moved too quickly, the lid slid away, the tap turned on and in he went!

By 1949 a Parents and Friends Association was formed to support the Sunday School, with women meeting every month in the home of Edie Le Mesurier, planning functions and making an endless supply of cakes and jams to sell. They contributed in a major way to the eventual new building. They still meet there and are still making cakes!

Lot 112 in Edinburgh Road was acquired in 1950 and in 1952 an Interim Building Committee was formed, with Mr. J. Brindley volunteering as honorary architect, though church wardens had in mind only a church hall.

Many Castlecrag people had a church in mind however, something dignified but contemporary, with lots of daylight

and materials in keeping with the bushland surroundings. Working bees of volunteers had been clearing the site for six months when building of the foundations, crypt and hall began in April 1954 and by July, the Lower Hall was finished and furnished through generosity of many donors. The opening of this hall was by the then Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Reverend H.W.K. Mowll, with the church packed and some 300 people outside.

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How the Church was built
continued from page 3

Now there was a place for the Sunday School and Church, Fellowship meetings, Girls' Friendly Society, physical culture, the annual musical comedy performance, choir practice and the Wednesday prayer meeting. Before long, accommodation for services was strained and the Sunday School, with regular attendance of well over 100 children, was once more holding classes outside, on the rocks or stone fences. ...but the church building fund was yet slow.

In an effort to speed up the process in 1956, every known Anglican family in the district was canvassed, which over time, bore enough financial results for the purchase of the adjoining land and the building of what is now St. James Church, opened and dedicated by Bishop F.F. Hulme-Moir. This final work marked a fitting climax to the work of Rev. C.E. Reynolds, during whose incumbency the whole of the planning and building had been carried out.

With a debt to pay off and maintenance costs, locals once again put in time and energy to create events for the community of Castlecrag to enjoy — the annual art shows, the musical comedies, fetes and fashion parades. St. James church is an example of what a community can do when it works together for a shared goal.



Mrs Dorothy O'Connor and Mrs. Edie Le Mesurier, contributed to the celebration service as they have helped the Anglican church in Castlecrag for 50 years.

Letter from a 'St James kid'

Thank you for the invitation to be a part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of Castlecrag's wonderful St. James Church. I am really sorry that I cannot be there, but I'll be there in spirit.

My earliest memories of the 'new' building go back to when I was about 10 years old. I remember finding the modernity of the buiding quite confronting but exciting. It somehow captured the special elements of Castlecrag at that time — elements that in those days made it such a unique place to live in. The population of Castlecrag back then was both eclectic and eccentric. We had the established Arts fraternity from the Walter Burley Griffin days and a group of young professional families moving into our better real estate as well as not-so-wealthy families from the east and west of Sydney.

St. James was able to offer sanctuary and a certain focus to this community and it provided a meeting place, a performance space and a forum for all kinds of community activities.

Not many of the original inhabitants are still with us, and colourful citizens such as Bim and Roma Hilder, Blossom Hopkinson, Bernard Hesling and also Johnny O'Keefe and Leonard Teale have passed into legend. The familiar ambience of the place has changed forever, for people of my generation. However, Castlecrag will continue to be a desirable and wonderful place to live and I know that the new mix of inhabitants will hold St. James as dearly as we have. My best wishes to St. James and to you all.

David Foster (born 1945, raised in Castlecrag)

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Our Reserves & Walkways, *cont. from page 2*

Proposed action

The key theme from the consultation is the importance of managing the system as an integrated whole. This process would need to address funding issues, including the possible introduction of an Environmental Levy for Willoughby.

Two potential additions to the draft Plan of Management emerge from recognition of their international significance:

- The significance of the Griffin Estate landscape design should be listed by the Willoughby LEP 1995 and a statement of significance submitted to the NSW Heritage Office Register and Register of the National Estate as an item of international significance.
- In recognition of its significance to the wider community, Council should be seeking external support for the preservation and maintenance of the Griffin reserve system from State and National heritage funds.

Recognition of this significance provides the strategic base for a workable Plan of Management which we hope to see implemented in the not-too-distant future. 

CPA committee

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Griffin's Gift to Castlecrag

continued from page 2

Finally, the fifth principle was predicated on the Griffins' belief that by sharing in the care of the reserves, good neighbourly relations would be fostered. A levy was placed on lot holders to maintain the overall network of open space.

So what has happened to the grand vision? From the start there were problems. The Griffins thought it would be possible to live in the Hawkesbury sandstone flora, without the more orthodox suburban gardens and lawns. They thought it would be possible to maintain the bush as a matrix with houses dotted within, melding into the bush surrounds with minimal disturbance; with the inhabitants happy to live in a mutually-shared environment, where one space flowed into another across the sandstone terrain, without assertive boundary fences. However, much fragmentation has taken place.

The ridgetop had already been cleared and as the early photographs show, had something of a desert quality. Although replanted, the heathland vegetation could not be sustained. Also, Griffin lost the campaign to prevent overhead electrical wires, which caused more loss of trees and more fragmentation of the canopy. Then there was the introduction of the septic system, which began enriching the soil.

After Griffin's death in Lucknow, India, Marion returned briefly to Castlecrag but left in 1938 for Chicago. Without the Griffins, Castlecrag was subject to a considerably different kind of development, yet many of its subtle and idiosyncratic qualities have survived. The network of reserves and the surviving tree canopy has maintained a bushland atmosphere, if not sustainable bushland. The Plan of Management (PoM) for the Griffin reserves documents this condition and sets out what is to be done. These days, conservation is about active management. The system of reserves is now highly modified and will need a very active form of management, I hope through a plan of action sustained over a long period of time.

It is vital for new residents to share in this level of understanding, as it is in everybody's interests to conserve the indigenous vegetation of the Hawkesbury sandstone which is now rare in Sydney's residential environment. The current interest in building large houses causes fundamental planning problems for all waterfront areas. The result, as the Griffins foresaw, is the despoliation of the very landscape and waterscape that has attracted development to these areas in the first place.

What you have in Castlecrag is so rare and distinctive that it seems inconceivable that anyone would seek to destroy it. There are the physical achievements of the conservation groups, eg the active management of the Harold Reid Reserve, the regeneration work above Sugarloaf Bay, and the restoration of the Haven Amphitheatre. I place faith in there being enough vision and support for the long-term conservation of Castlecrag's natural assets. Castlecrag is recognised internationally as an example of planning with nature. It is a living monument to the Griffins and the generations of residents who have shared their love for this special place and acted accordingly.

CPA CONSTITUTION: PROPOSED CHANGES

CONSTITUTION ISSUES

During 1996, a sub-committee reviewed the Castlecrag Progress Association constitution. Their proposed changes failed to gain the necessary majority at a Special Meeting on 19 November 1996. The sub-committee made further revisions to their draft Constitution and submitted this to the Committee on 22 May 1997. The Committee has thoroughly reviewed the proposals, holding two special workshops to work through the Constitution issues and specific changes in detail. There is now agreement on the substance of most changes and the efforts of all concerned have contributed to a more user-friendly and practical Constitution. In order to ensure majority support for the proposed changes, members need to be fully consulted and provided with the opportunity to make constructive input to the process to arrive at a final product which has broad support. Accordingly, discussion on the draft Constitution will be on the agenda at our 26 August general meeting. For the guidance of all members, the following are the key issues on which we seek your guidance:

1.3 BOUNDARIES

Sub-committee proposed that the membership area be restricted to the suburb of Castlecrag as defined by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales. This would exclude current members in the area extending across Eastern Valley Way to the junction with Windsor Road, the properties on the western side of Windsor Road to Edinburgh Road, the properties on the northern side of Edinburgh Road to Eastern Valley Way, the properties on the western side of Eastern Valley Way to Sugarloaf Crescent. This area has traditionally been part of the Castlecrag Progress Association and negotiations between the Federation of Progress Associations and Willoughby Council over boundaries in 1993 agreed this area should remain in the CPA. The Committee recommends the present boundaries be retained.

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3.1 ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP

Perceived delays in approval of membership under the present Constitution have been a source of dissatisfaction. In response to this concern, the sub-committee recommended that applications be brought before the next committee meeting not less than 28 days and not more than 56 days after receipt of the application. The Committee recommends that applications be considered not more than two calendar months after receipt AND that the existing restriction on voting be amended as follows:

(3) A minimum of two calendar months from the date of receipt of membership application is obligatory for a member to be eligible to vote.

7. REGISTER OF MEMBERS

Privacy and copyright with respect to the CPA register of members has emerged as a matter of controversy during the past year, resulting in the Committee seeking legal advice on their responsibilities in managing access. The sub-committee did not recommend any change in this area. The Committee recommends the following amendment be made to clarify access to the register:

(2) The register of members shall be open for inspection, free of charge, by any member of the association at any reasonable hour. The register shall not be copied in any manner or removed, nor used for commercial purposes or purposes not approved by the committee.

14. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

The sub-committee argued that the present procedures for nomination of committee members for election at the annual general meeting be changed to the following:

(1) Nominations of candidates for election as office bearers of the association or as committee members shall be called at the general meeting prior to the annual general meeting and the names of nominees will be published to members at least 7 days prior to the date of the annual general meeting. Nomination forms, duly seconded and bearing the personal consent of the nominee endorsed thereon must be lodged with the secretary at least 14 days before the annual general meeting.

The Committee believes this requirement to be unnecessarily prescriptive and administratively demanding for a community organisation such as ours and there is concern that it may lead to divisive campaigning in future. They therefore recommend that the present arrangements be retained. However, we wish to obtain the guidance of members on this matter and invite discussion of the need for changes in this area and, if these are felt necessary, invite suggestions on improvements which are not unduly demanding on administrative input by office bearers.

20. DELEGATION BY COMMITTEE TO SUB-COMMITTEE

Rule 20 deals with delegation of committee responsibilities to sub-committees. Concern has been raised that the activities and decisions of sub-committees have not been properly recorded. The Committee recommends that clause (8) be strengthened to require the convenor or secretary for each sub-committee to: "minute the proceedings of the sub-committee."

25. NOTICE

The sub-committee has recommended that current references to publishing notices in *The Crag* be simplified to "cause to be published", thus providing future flexibility to respond to changes in publishing technology. The Committee supports these changes. The sub-committee further recommends that notice of meeting include the proposed agenda. While the Committee supports the provision of as much advice to members as practical, there is concern that specification of the agenda in the Constitution is too prescriptive and may lead to rigid agenda notices designed just to meet the rules. Feed-back from members is sought on this issue.

CPA Committee

on community interest

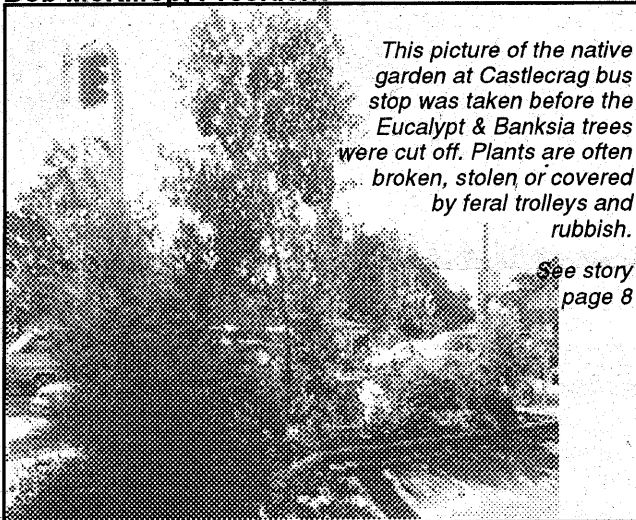
Since the AGM in March, the CPA committee has had a hectic round of activity addressing issues surrounding the Foreshore Building Line, the draft Plan of Management for the Griffin Reserves, Walkways and Islands (pp 1,2 & 5) and the CPA Constitution (p.6). We have also responded to residents' concerns regarding traffic, the destruction of trees and new development proposals. In addition to formal meetings, these tasks have made considerable demands on our time.

This experience has highlighted the difficulties we often face in separating *self-interest* from *community* interest. Much of the emotion and passion which has arisen through these issues is derived from perceptions of how a particular development, controlling instrument or policy will affect an individual's property values, privacy, views or other aspects of their personal amenity. While the Progress Association appreciates these perspectives, we need to address these issues from the perspective of the wider community interest.

Our community has given heritage value to the places and things that are special to us, which make Castlecrag unique.

In many instances, this sense of heritage extends beyond our immediate community to the region, state and nation. The community has an obligation to protect and manage this heritage on behalf of current and future generations. Unfortunately, sometimes this community interest will conflict with the self-interest of some residents. The Progress Association is an excellent forum where members can have a say on these and all local issues.

Bob McKillop, President



This picture of the native garden at Castlecrag bus stop was taken before the Eucalypt & Banksia trees were cut off. Plants are often broken, stolen or covered by feral trolleys and rubbish.

See story page 8

L. J. HOOKER CASTLECRAG

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Revision of Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

Willoughby City Council is in the final stages of revising its TPO, the draft of which was on public exhibition early in 1996. The objective of the Order is :

'To secure and preserve the amenity and enhance the environment of the City, by providing a regulatory framework for the preservation and management of trees.'

The Order applies to:

- any trees including shrubs, whether endemic, exotic or introduced species, which have:
 - a height exceeding 4 metres and/or
 - a trunk girth over 600mm, or 200mm in diameter, measured at one metre above the ground, and/or
 - a branch canopy width exceeding 3m
- any vegetation in bushland
- any locally rare or threatened plant species (list available from Council).

Exemptions do exist, and trees not requiring written approval (unless they are located in a Conservation Area or on the site of a heritage item identified in Willoughby LEP1995) are: (using common names): Camphor Laurel, Loquat, Coral Tree, Rubber Tree, Silky Oak, Liquidambar, Poplar, Willow, Umbrella Tree.

Under Prohibition, it is not allowed to ringbark, cut down, lop, remove, injure, prune or wilfully destroy any vegetation in Clause 3 without Council approval, or excavate resulting in severing portions of a tree's root system, or change soil levels around any vegetation in Clause 3 for structures, driveways or installation of utilities.

Re Public Land including Council Reserves/Road Reserves: Council will prune or remove trees only for essential tree maintenance. Any non-essential or cosmetic pruning for view or additional solar access would be required to be approved by Council and the cost of all non-essential works would be met by the applicant.

On Private Property, applicants would have to either attach to their application a report from a qualified arborist justifying the removal, or submit with the application the newly-introduced inspection fee for inspection by Council staff.

Editor's Note: The above clause is a matter of concern as conflicts of interest could frequently arise, with arborists being in the business of cutting down trees.

Given the seriousness of this clause, we suggest that Council place the Revised Tree Preservation Order on public exhibition for the period of one month, allowing residents time to consider and make submissions to Council on the TPO.

If the clause is included, we suggest that:

- Council establish a register of qualified arborists to carry out independent assessments and
- that assessors should NOT be allowed to implement their own recommendations.
- notification should be made to all adjacent households prior to assessment. This would be a responsible step in determining the justifiability of an application — in keeping with the objective of the TPO.

Castlecrag trees:

beautiful one day, *stumps* the next

At the very moment of chewing a metaphorical pencil, trying to write about the problem we have with our trees...suddenly there is a sound of the kind becoming stressingly familiar on this fair peninsula. Yes, folks, it's the chainsaw. An elongated *Brrroom* followed by reverberating *crash!* The process is repeated until there is a short, sad silence, quickly followed by heavy machinery moving in to finish the job.

I know it's happening too far away from me to check it out — if it is close by, I do. Silly really, because it's too late anyway. Usually there is a permit: 'This angophora has nodules on it' the arborist helpfully explains. Nodules? He shows me the cut sections. They are perfectly sound. There are however, some small, clean growths on the outside — nodules. Another time I phone the Council tree preservation officer, asking if there is a permit. 'Can't see one for this year' he replies. 'Might have been for last year, permits last for a year, you know'.

Plenty more trees in the bush, they say...but for how much longer? The annual toll in Castlecrag is now too high to sustain the canopy we have — or had. Every year we adjust our vision to accommodate the lesser coverage, so we lose our sense of what it should be. Real estate agents, designers and architects often talk about 'opening up the views', but do water and other people's houses really make the consummate view?

Then there's the *Invasion of the Cherrypickers* — a B-grade movie showing most mornings at a street near us. Our coral trees in Edinburgh Road, given a nice central lopping to accommodate Optus and bundled cables, are a case in point. Not a good idea. Coral trees don't take kindly to violent lopping, they sometimes fall over.

Did I forget the RTA? I suspect they too have proved their vigilance recently by ruinously truncating the young Banksia and Eucalypt at the main bus stop native garden, which were importunately growing near the Castlecrag sign. And they were doing so *well!*

At the current rate of 'little disappearances', we will soon share the same quality of air as North Sydney. Will we notice the difference? Possibly not. We will merely have adjusted our vision.

Adele Barnett

The school crossing: wombats or bunnies?

Council has sent a new plan of the proposed Wombat Crossing at the school on Edinburgh Road, which the Committee supports in principle. While we are pleased that our request for sandstone-edged garden beds has been included in the design, we are disappointed that upgrading of the pedestrian crossing without action to slow east-bound traffic coming around the corner, leaves us with a dangerous situation.

A wombat crossing outside the school should be accompanied by a 40k zone either side or it provides little safety for those who use it. The LATM Committee previously discussed the possibility of a roundabout at Charles Street as a traffic-slowing solution, but this was rejected by residents living close by.

An alternative might be a low roundabout at the corner of Edinburgh Rd and The Parapet, as a way of managing traffic at the Glenaeon School. It would slow traffic at the corner before the pedestrian crossing and provide Glenaeon parents the ability to turn around without making dangerous U-turns or entering The Parapet from the wrong side of the traffic island. It would need to be designed with a low wall and with low vegetation, with the aim of complementing the existing traffic island.

Previous *Crag* newsletters have mentioned various forms of traffic control for all Edinburgh Road, because it is our main strip, where people walk and cars speed. (Ed.)

NEXT CPA GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday 28 August, 8pm
at the Community Centre

Agenda

- Community News: traffic report, community noticeboard and update on Telstra Tower and Members' Survey
- Constitution review: responses from members on key aspects of proposed changes (see p.6 of this issue)
- Tree Preservation Order: response to resident concerns re vandalism and effectiveness of the TPO

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 1997. 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 1996 will automatically be eligible to vote in 1997 as soon as the 1997 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.