

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF
THE CASTLECRAG
PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION

No. 13

AUGUST, 1980

FACELIFT FOR "THE CRAG"

BY BOB RONAI

The number 13 is often treated as an omen of bad luck. In the case of "The Crag" however, we hope that it is just the opposite. From this issue onwards, this publication will be produced by offset printing instead of our old method on a very ancient Roneo stencil duplicator.

To cover the costs of printing, collating, stapling and folding, we are taking another step forward and accepting advertisements from local shopkeepers and other interested people. We hope that the residents of Castlecrag will support our advertisers, just as those advertisers support the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Over the years there have been various publications issued by this Association, generally during times of some local crisis or other, but rarely continuing for more than a couple of issues. Similarly with "The Crag", being born out of a particular crisis.

In the early stages it served its intended purpose in informing Castlecrag's residents of our efforts against an undesirable development, and uniting our residents to the extent that some two hundred of them attended a Council meeting to hear discussion on the problem. Subsequently, the Castlecrag Progress Association took the development as far as the Local Government Appeals Tribunal, and it is through our efforts that the Quadrangle, though certainly not free of problems as we forecast, has turned out to be a building of some quality. "The Crag" also played its part in rallying our residents to contribute about \$6000 towards the legal costs incurred in the fight.

Now "The Crag" moves on, developing, we hope, into an interesting newsletter delivered every two months to all homes in Castlecrag and the immediately surrounding area. Any suburb where the residents care about their area will always have problems surfacing, and we intend keeping you informed of them.

The Committee of the Castlecrag Progress Association believes that our newsletter is rather unique amongst residents groups in Sydney, but then again, haven't we always considered Castlecrag just a little bit different? We're proud of "The Crag" and we hope our readers are too.

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"The Crag" is edited by Bob Ronai, 103 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag, 2068, and published by the Castlecrag Progress Association.

CASTLECRAG CELLERS

122 EDINBURGH ROAD, CASTLECRAG



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FOR SALE!

MAGNIFICENT CASTLECRAG
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AND READ IN NEARLY 1500
HOUSEHOLDS IN AND AROUND
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FOR DETAILS OF RATES
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It pays to advertise!!

ALDERMAN'S REPORT

BY ALD. DIANNE STREET

The main issues in Willoughby Council during the past weeks have revolved around concern for high-rise building, residential flats, and retail development in Chatswood.

The highlight of the month was the crowded public meeting at the St. Leonards School Hall, Naremburn. It was arranged and chaired by the Mayor of Willoughby.

The aim was to discuss with residents, Council, and the Department of Main Roads, the proposals and plans for the expressway extensions to Pacific Highway, Gore Hill.

It was the biggest public meeting held in that area, and the concerned and vocal residents & shopkeepers rejected all four proposals.

There is a lesson here for Castlecrag.

The feelings of the residents were clearly expressed. Their life-style had deteriorated. Traffic chaos was evident in all residential streets. Naremburn and nearby areas had been raped by bureaucratic bungling and procrastination.

NEXT MEETING OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1980, AT 8PM
CASTLECRAG COMMUNITY CENTRE, OFF THE POSTERN
EVERYONE WELCOME

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY ERIC KAYE

1. *OUR ALDERMAN.* At the Progress Association Committee Meeting held on July 16, members were disappointed to learn from Dee Street, our popular, colourful and hard-working Alderman, that because of pressing personal commitments she would not seek preselection for a further term on the Willoughby Council. Dee, like John Crew before her, has represented us very conscientiously both in Council and in other Community activities. Her aim has been to encourage pride in Castlecrag and to protect our heritage.

2. *THE KIRBY ENQUIRY.* The Committee considers that the greatest single threat to our suburb comes from the continuing pressure by Willoughby Council and the other North Shore Councils for the retention of the abandoned expressway corridor as a future transport artery. This of course means a future expressway. The Commission of Enquiry into future uses of the corridor is now scheduled for later this year, and as is well known, we intend to make a submission to this Enquiry. Our report is nearing completion, and thanks to modern technology the data is stored on magnetic disc. This is being processed for us by *Rapidtext Editorial Processing Centre*. Last minute additions or changes to the document are possible and we still seek further assistance from residents in the form of written submissions or data for our report.

3. *LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN.* The building covenants which were defined by Walter Burley Griffin have long since been disregarded. Periodically moves have been made by the Progress Association to define new rules. Until this year little has been achieved. On February 4, however, on the initiative of Dee Street, Willoughby Council resolved: "... to prepare a local environmental plan ... and introduce appropriate planning controls ... to maintain the area in its natural state ... and avoid developments which will adversely affect the area." Subsequently the Mayor has announced that a public meeting will be held shortly, to call for nominations for members of a Resident Advisory Committee, who will work with officers of Willoughby Council in defining a local environmental plan for Castlecrag.

4. *ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR NEXT ALDERMAN.* The issues above are very important for Castlecrag and it is imperative that the good work already started be continued. It has been normal for us to issue a joint ticket with the endorsed candidates from Middle Cove and Castlecove. We seek a candidate whose interests are in accordance with those of the majority of the members of the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Finally, please come along to our next meeting on August 5 to express your views on these matters and to democratically select our next candidate for Willoughby Council.

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CASTLECRAG INFANTS' SCHOOL

BY ALISON WHITTLE, PRINCIPAL

To date it has been a very busy year for Castlecrag Infants' School where the present enrolment is 67. Parental support and involvement has been very evident at our social functions; the Parent-Teacher evening in first term; recently completed Parent-Teacher interviews; and in the classrooms as well. Mothers come up regularly to help with gross motor, library, reading, craft and we've had several "guest appearances" at our assemblies. We've also had a tree planting involving this year's kindergarten.

This term we've introduced a ¾hour "clubs" segment on Friday afternoons with 18 mothers sharing their talents with the children on a regular basis. This has enabled us to have eleven different activities (*cooking, origami, screen printing, tie dying, macrame, sewing, rug making, nature and gardening, recorder, collage, and papier mache.*) It is proving to be an enjoyable and profitable experience for all concerned. We are hoping to have a display of this work during Education Week - on the afternoon of Friday, August 15.

Looking forward to 1981 enrolments, I would ask anyone who has a pre-schooler (or who knows of any) turning 5 by 31st July, 1981, to call at the office for an enrolment form. Please bring with you proof of age (e.g. birth certificate) as this is a Departmental requirement. Our enrolments are determined by boundaries and you can check on these when you come to see us.

HISTORY OF CASTLECRAG

SMALL STREET INCINERATOR, WILLOUGHBY

BY ADDIE SALTIS

Not part of Castlecrag of course, but we have very close ties with it through its architects, Walter Burley Griffin and Eric Nicholls. So many of our residents have fought long and hard for its preservation and restoration that I think it is worth a mention now that its future seems assured.

Griffin and his partner Nicholls designed 12 incinerator buildings in Australia in the early 1930's for the Reverbatory Incinerator and Engineering Co. (REICo). Contrary to general belief, the incineration plant was of Australian design, patented by the Reverbatory Incinerator and Engineering Co. some years previously, though possibly improved after Griffin and the designer visited the U.S. in 1931.

The incinerators were sold to Councils as a package deal -- *"a refuse destruction system housed in a suitable building to an individual design by Walter Burley Griffin."* The Willoughby Incinerator was officially opened on September 6, 1934, and closed, in a very dilapidated condition, in 1972.

A request in 1973 to restore and convert it into a Graphic Art Studio and Tutorial Art Academy was turned down by Council and by 1975 the structure was deteriorating rapidly and Council proposed to demolish it.

There was a general outcry locally and in the press from architects, Castlecrag residents and Griffin 'buffs'. A Trust was proposed which sought to lease or acquire the building as a permanent Griffin Exhibition Centre. It has been classified by the National Trust as *"an intact and particularly successful example of an industrial building integrating function with site, and one of the most significant buildings erected in Australia in the 1930's."*

Finally, the Heritage Council approved a grant to assist its conservation and conversion into a restaurant, and this work is now nearing completion. I believe this restaurant is to be called "THE INCINERATOR."

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KINDERGARTEN NEWS

BY SUE RANDLE, HON. PRES.

The older children in the kindergarten often are taken for walks around the immediate area. Gradually the local shopkeepers are visited in turn and their generosity and friendliness towards the children enhance what the children have been learning. For example, in discussing what lives underwater we visited the fish shop, and returned to the kindergarten with several prawns to shell and eat. The greengrocer often saves sprouting vegetables for us, and last year the butcher showed us how sausages are made. He then cooked them, and we had a picnic with the butchers. The newsagent also showed the children how newspapers are rolled ready for delivery.



Castlecrag Squash Centre

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SPA, SAUNA, SOLARIUM

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SUMMARY OF MINUTES - MEETING OF 3RD JUNE, 1980

Chairman: Mrs. D. Street (Hon. Vice-President) in the absence of Mr. Eric Kaye overseas.

Correspondence: Letter from the Maritime Services Board of NSW advising that no detailed proposal for a marina at Northbridge had yet been received by them.

Letter from the N.R.M.A. advising that they are still taking up with the Dept. of Main Roads the matter of a right-turn arrow into Edinburgh Road (heading east). Meanwhile they suggest in the interests of safety that the approach to Castlecrag be made along Edinburgh Road instead of out of Eastern Valley Way.

Letters from both Police Headquarters and Chatswood in answer to our request for increased surveillance.

Letter from Dr. Korner to Willoughby Council on behalf the residents of lower Edinburgh Road, regarding high boundary walls.

Letter from Castlecrag Conservation Society to the Mayor re destruction of indigenous growth by Council workers.

Letter from the Castlecrag Progress Association to the Chairman, Commonwealth Banking Corp., protesting their lack of co-operation over the building and design of the new bank.

Letter from Castlecrag Progress Association to Council requesting renewal of one-way signs at the junction of Edinburgh Road and Sortie Port.

Guest Speakers: Inspector Gillette and Det. Sgt. Gilligan arrived at 8.30pm. There followed a general discussion on the new shopping area, vandalism, crime, drugs and traffic.

Conservation Society: Mr. John Lee spoke of a successful meeting brought about by a protest at the destruction of plants by Council Workers. Mrs. Bev Blacklock reported that Judy Messer had been asked to look at two private reserves.

Bus Shelters: A motion by Mr. Ken Wolf that the Castlecrag Progress Association spends dollar-for-dollar with Willoughby Council on the building of bus shelters for the area, that at the next meeting three designs and costs be submitted for decision, and that a request then be put to Council. Accepted.

Alderman's Report: Mrs. Street spoke of the non-cooperation of the Bank in building their new premises too high, too close to the street, etc. Also on the need for the community to be vigilant over new buildings and plant destruction.

Next meeting: Tuesday evening, 8pm, August 5, at the Castlecrag Community Centre.

CASTLECRAG CONSERVATION SOCIETY
TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF
BUSHFIRE PREVENTION IN THE URBAN COMMUNITY,

BY JUDY MESSER

The recent bushfire on the Castlecrag escarpment has once again drawn attention to an ongoing problem that has two equally important but at times conflicting aspects. Firstly it is now generally accepted that the conservation of our natural bushland areas is a necessity, not only in terms of the preservation of plant and animal communities, but also for the more complex ecological reasons (such as plants' production of oxygen, the very basis of human life itself). People who live close to bushland areas also enjoy personal benefits in terms of a healthier and more aesthetically rewarding physical environment, and higher economic values for their properties.

The latter benefit is also the source of the main problem, ie: how to protect that property without eliminating the natural bushland in the process.

Until recently, prevention has centred on the clearing of firebreaks and controlled burning within the natural areas. Both of these measures are disastrous in terms of bushland conservation, and ineffective if householders have not taken due care themselves, both on their own properties and in the community overall.

Firebreaks not only eliminate a measurable area of indigenous vegetation, but also promote the intrusion and proliferation of weeds which further degrade the bushland (and may themselves be flammable). Controlled burning, because of low fire temperatures, frequency, and an inappropriate season, has led not only to a reduction in the number and range of plant species, but also eliminates vital habitats such as hollow trees and logs, etc.

Recent scientific studies have conclusively demonstrated the adverse effects of such practices, and research is being carried out on alternative methods. In the short term a number of more appropriate and constructive approaches could be adopted and developed.

Such measures involve the cooperation of all those property owners adjoining natural bushland areas. Space precludes a lengthy analysis, but two points are important. Fire spreads via the canopy as much as the undergrowth. And it is the area within 15 metres of the house that requires the greatest attention, and this area is most likely to be on private property.

Therefore, in order to preserve the bushland (which has been shown to have both social & ecological value) and property, residents should ensure that it is this area which is most free from fire hazards.

The Castlecrag Conservation Society will soon be publishing more detailed guidelines, including information both on what you can do, and what other concerned communities are doing about this most important problem.

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Contributions to THE CRAG from any community-interest groups, churches, and so on, are most welcome. Please phone the Editor, Bob Ronai, on home phone number 95 4247 evenings, to discuss space etc.

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