

THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION INC.

Seventy nine years of community development
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April 2003

Castlecrag Progress Association

6/77 Edinburgh Road,
Castlecrag
Web page: [www.
castlecragcommunity.com](http://www.castlecragcommunity.com)

President: Kate Westoby

Vice presidents: David Harrop

Bob McKillop

Secretary: Elizabeth Lander

Treasurer: Diana Jones

Committee: Tina Hicks

Peter Moffitt

Howard Rubie

Gay Spies

John Steel

General Meeting dates for 2003

Sunday 4 May at 2pm:

(Annual General Meeting)

Tuesday 26 August 8pm

Tuesday 21 October 8pm

Progress Association Membership
is now due (see form on page 4).

Please send all correspondence
and membership renewals to the
above address.

The Crag is edited by
Kerry McKillop 9958 4516
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Community Fair 2003 : Edinburgh Road LATM

It's on again!! The Castlecrag Community Fair will be held on Sunday, 1 June. Community groups in the suburb will be participating and we hope to make a big and enjoyable event.

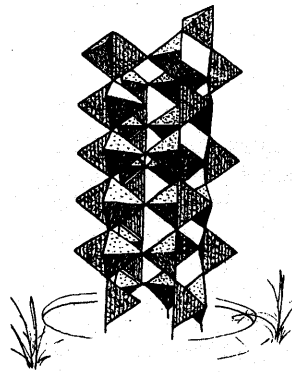
Following the success of the 2001 Community Fair, residents were anticipating a similar event last year, but the uncertainties surrounding public liability insurance prevented our holding an event in 2002. We have secured insurance cover for the forthcoming event and an enthusiastic committee has planning well in hand.

The Fair serves to bring the various community groups and businesses in our suburb together. Local community groups will again conduct stalls in the car parks adjacent to the Griffin Centre and an expanded range of food and drink outlets will be available.

Activities commence at 10am and will continue through to 3pm. Entertainment will again be provided on a stage at the site, with music, poetry reading and other attractions.

The Progress Association committee has agreed that any

profits from this (and former Fairs) will go to a project initiated by Willoughby Council to restore the Griffin memorial fountain in Edinburgh Road to operating condition.



Bim Hilder's Griffin Memorial Fountain

The Progress Association will again be conducting its popular *Trash & treasure stall* at the Fair. Donations of any unwanted items would be much appreciated, and others will find a new home for your former treasures. Contact the following people for pickup:

Peter Moffitt (9958 1213); Kate Westoby (9958 0215); or Bob McKillop (9958 4516).

After many years of agitation by Castlecrag residents for enhanced traffic safety measures in Edinburgh Road, the proposed works have now been marked out on the roadway by Council's engineers.

The Crag newsletter has provided regular updates on the history of the LATM proposals since 1975. Including descriptions of the current proposals in the October 2002 (No. 144) and February 2003 (No. 145) issues. Now that the designs have been marked out, Council officers will be undertaking further consultation with local residents to gain their views.

The proposed works are the result of extensive community consultation in the early 1990s by a Council-initiated LATM committee, including large public meetings. A Residents' Survey in 1997 highlighted traffic issues as a major concern (*The Crag* No.118). Traffic management consultants were employed by Council in 1998 and, following extensive consultation with the community, their recommendations were placed on public exhibition in April-May 1999.



The publication of *The Crag* newsletter is made a reality by advertising from our local businesses. Thank you for your continued support of the Association's newsletter to our community.

Castlecrag Progress Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, 4 May 2003

Guest Speaker, Linda Cardew
Willoughby's Civic Place Project
(see page 3)

All welcome

Community Centre at 2pm
Refreshments provided

Community Bytes

Castlecrag on the Web

The Progress Association has established a Castlecrag website to promote our suburb and provide information to residents on community activities.

Developed by Karen Benhar on behalf of the Progress Association, the website contains information on the history of Castlecrag, its built and natural environment and details of local services and community groups. The intention is to provide regular updates on news and events of interest to local residents and others with an interest in our suburb.

The website is still under development, so we would like your feedback on its structure and content. You can visit us at:

www.castlecragcommunity.com

Please send your comments and suggestions to: Karen (karen.benhar@idx.com.au) or Kirsten at (ksmckillop@bigpond.com).

The Progress Association is indebted to Karen for her time and skill in preparing the web site. Thankyou Karen.

DA Notification Process

Further to *The Crag* No. 145, the Progress Association made comment on DCP 27 covering the processing and notification of Development Applications (DAs). We complimented Council on its efforts to enhance the objectivity, equity and transparency of the DA process through improved procedures. Together with the Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations, we commented favourably on the proposed differentiation between developments of differing magnitudes in DCP 27, as this would allow a more rigorous assessment process for large developments. The Federation proposed that applicants should be responsible for listing all non-compliant features on their DA so that these can be

included in notifications. Moreover, it recommended that if the information provided was incorrect or incomplete, then the application should be rejected and the applicant should bear the costs of any re-application. It was submitted that this principle would greatly speed up the processing of DAs.

DCP 19 Heritage & Conservation

Council is revising DCP 19 covering Heritage and Conservation, including the Castlecrag Griffin Conservation Area, and this is currently on public exhibition. Written submissions will be received up to 23 May 2003.

The Tarasov Saga

This book, by Castlecrag author Gary Nash (*The Crag* No. 143), has been selected by the Australian Bookseller and Publisher as one of the top 20 non-fiction books of 2002. More details of the book can be seen on the website www.trioslav.com/tarasov.htm. If you would like your copy of the book autographed, please contact Gary on 9958 3089.

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Civic Place Project

Willoughby City's new Civic Place is now moving into the final planning stage for this very significant and exciting project, with the Civic Place Masterplan going on public exhibition

The Civic Place Masterplan is a visionary and achievable proposal for a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable cultural and recreational heart for the community of Willoughby and for the North Shore. It promises to be a public domain of quality and functional excellence in every sense, the "heart and soul" of Willoughby City. The proposed new facilities are two superb levels of terraced open space, a 5000m² Library, 1000 seat concert hall, 500 seat theatre, multi-purpose hall, rehearsal spaces, meeting rooms, 460 car spaces, cafes, restaurants, retail spaces and a boutique hotel.

The Exhibition will be situated in the foyer of the Civic Centre, 409 Victoria Avenue Chatswood, from April 22 until September 2003. To find out more about the Civic Place, please come along to the Progress Association's AGM on Sunday 4 May to hear guest speaker Linda Cardew's address (see Page 1).

Streets to Creeks



Willoughby Council's *Streets to Creeks—Sailors Bay* program aims to help prevent pollution and protect our bushland, creeks and the waters of Sailors Bay. Since its launch in February, the community

has shown great interest in the program, with good attendances at the bushwalks, spotlight walks, family activities and talks on wildlife and gardening.

Clean Up Australia Day was a great success, with many people joining the 1st Sailors Bay Scouts, Earth Ministry and 1st Northbridge Scouts at different sites across the catchment. School students have been involved, with Northbridge Primary and St Philip Neri School creating an environmental performance and floating sea sculptures. Others have participated in the *Streets to Creeks* community projects, with enthusiasts from the Haven Amphitheatre performing water-inspired poetry, and residents creating postcards with stormwater messages.

At the Haven



If you did not see the pantomime, *The Eggstraordinary Magic Muddle*, at The Haven Amphitheatre on 29-30 March, you will now have to wait until next year. Presented by the newly-formed Haven Players, the well-attended show was a delightful and delicious success.

Full of fun, singing and dancing, it was thoroughly enjoyed by the young family audience. With the increasing number of young families in Castlecrag, the Haven Committee has decided to present a children's pantomime or similar production as an annual event. It will be scheduled on the week-end before the end of daylight saving in March.

The next event will be during the Willoughby Spring Festival in September. For information about our program for the remainder of 2003, please call the Haven Hotline on 9405 5078, or Howard Rubie on 0418 648 870.

2003 Heritage Week

Castlecrag's Heritage Week activities on Sunday, 13 April attracted large numbers of visitors to our suburb. Various heritage groups provided stalls in the top car park near the Griffin Centre shops, while the Walter Burley Griffin Society did brisk business selling tickets to a range of walks exploring the historic and modern features of Castlecrag.

The guided walks attracted over 300 visitors. Professor James Weirick led the first of his two specialist Griffin walks at 10am, while short *Introductory Griffin Walks* and *Exploring Griffin's Castlecrag Walks* set off at regular intervals from 11am. A new attraction was a series of walks exploring the work of some of Australia's most celebrated modern architects. Led by Eric Sierens, Stephen Davies and Ben Gerstel, these walks looked at houses by Peter Muller, Harry Siedler, Bill Lucas, Phillip Cox and Alex Popov. All the walks were aided by an outdoor photographic display of historic prints of Castlecrag, many of them by Max Dupain.

The committee of the Griffin Society and its energetic president Andrew Kirk deserve congratulation for all the hard work required to organise such a successful day.

The Haven Amphitheatre hosted *Sailors Bay Concertos* by the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra and poetry reading by local residents from 12.30pm.

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History of Castlecrag: Part 5

1928 The GSDA produced a **promotional film** of the Griffin estates at Castlecrag, entitled *Beautiful Middle Harbour*. This is available on a video from FilmSound Australia, *Keepin' Silent*, which features a selection of classic Australian silent films.

1928 The **GSDA brochure**, *Castlecrag Homes: scenic marine suburb Middle Harbour* states that the reserves and pathways of the Griffin subdivision 'are designed to perpetuate the delightful rambles which were a feature of Castlecrag before its development.'

1929 At a meeting with officers at Willoughby Council to discuss the Castlecrag estates, Griffin detailed his **design principles** for the conservation of 'our greatest asset, the pristine beauty of the landscape'. The objective for the design of fences was invisibility, while natural growth thickets were favoured for general screening.

1929 The **Ivanhoe Private School** was run by Mrs Walter Trinick at her home in Sunnyside Crescent. Certified by the Department of Education, it operated until circa 1933.

1929 The most celebrated of the Castlecrag Griffin houses, the **Fishwick House** at 15 The Citadel, was built. The client was Thomas W Fishwick, a representative of John Fowler & Co. of Leeds. Built on a wedge-shaped block in The Citadel, it presents a forbidding narrow façade to the street, but has panoramic views to The Spit. Another Griffin-designed house was constructed for Roy and Beryl Wilson at **2 The Barbette**. Ray Wilson was a salesman for the GSDA and the design of the house expresses much of the idealism of the community. It demonstrates a linear house form favoured by the Griffins, with the living room at one end. The octagonal living room with its massive fireplace has frequently been used for play readings and other cultural events.

1929 **Sir George S Beeby** purchased the Griffin-designed **Felstead House** (158 Edinburgh Road) and moved to Castlecrag with his family. Beeby had been a leading figure in the rise of the Labor Party to power in New South Wales, becoming Minister for Labour and Industry in 1910 and introducing a new Industrial Arbitration Act in 1912. He established a centrist Progressive Party in 1913 and in 1920, he was appointed a judge of the Industrial & Arbitration Court. Beeby was also a prominent playwright and his interests made him and his family active members of the Castlecrag community. The large living areas of the *Felstead House* made it a popular meeting place for the community group, Neighbourhood Circle, in the late 1930s and 1940s. Beeby's son, Edward represented Griffin in the Rivett case and his daughter, Doris Isobel, joined the Spanish Relief Movement during the civil war and was a prominent workers' advocate in Australia after the War. She died at Castlecrag in 1948.

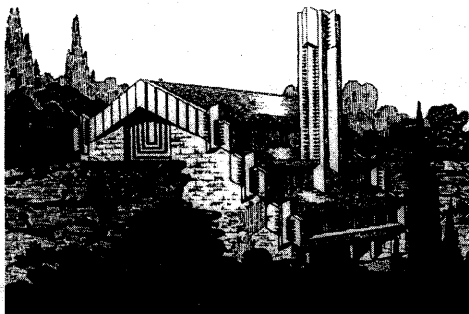
1931 In an **Arbor Day ceremony**, residents helped the Griffins plant 250 eucalypts along Edinburgh Road, augmenting 1500 trees and shrubs already planted by the Castlecrag Progress Association.

1933 An architecture student at the University of Sydney, **Nancy Price**, completed her BArch thesis 'Walter Burley Griffin' - the first scholarly investigation of Griffin's life and work.

1934 **The Haven Scenic Theatre** (now called Haven Amphitheatre) was designed by Walter and Marion Griffin as a stone-tiered amphitheatre for community plays, and built by Bim Hilder. The site has perfect acoustics and the bushland setting provided (and continues to provide) wonderful scope for creating realistic stage effects. The first production, in September 1934, was *The Mystery Drama of Eleusis* by Edouard Schuré, directed by Marion Griffin and Lute Drummond. Drama festivals were held until World War II.

1934 The last Griffin house built in Castlecrag, the **Duncan House**, was completed at 8 The Barbette for Frank and Anice Duncan. The original house was very small combining panels of knitlock with stone corner piers, and with French doors integrating the house with its surroundings. The Duncans were active in community life and were keen bush walkers.

1935 **The Willoughby Incinerator** was built in Nareburn to the design of Griffin and his partner Eric Nicholls for the Reverberatory Incinerator and Engineering Company, providing a new technology to cope with Willoughby's waste disposal problems.




Artist's drawing of the Willoughby Incinerator, 1935*

The building is regarded as the best surviving example of Griffin's industrial work, a marvellous architectural composition which makes maximum advantage of its hillside setting. Willoughby Council has received acclaim for saving and restoring the building and it is now listed on the Register of the National Estate.

*From Johnson, DL *The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin* 1977 Griffin Press, Adelaide

Adrienne Kabos, James Weirick and Bob McKillop



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