

# THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS  
ASSOCIATION INC.

Seventy nine years of community development  
ISSN 0814 - 2054

No. 148

October 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: Peter Moffitt

Jill Newton

Howard Rubie

Gay Spies

John Steel

### General Meeting

Tuesday 28 October 8pm  
Castlecrag Community Centre

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

The Crag is edited by  
Kerry McKillop 9958 4516  
Elizabeth Lander 9958 5384

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

The Crag is printed by  
Bertram Printing  
Bertram Street  
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Tel. 9415 1070

## Marguerite (Rita) Kaye: 1917-2003

Marguerite Elizabeth Kaye, a resident of Castlecrag for nearly 60 years and a former editor of *The Crag* newsletter, passed away in August 2003. She is survived by her husband, Eric, her daughter, Barbara, four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Marguerite, affectionately known as Rita, was born at home in Paddington on 3 July 1917. After living in various houses in Sydney's east, Rita's family moved to Northbridge.

It was here she met Eric Kaye and they were married on 21 February 1942. They always had a great love for the outdoors and their honeymoon was spent bushwalking from Bungonia down the Grose Valley to the Kangaroo Valley.

Rita and Eric purchased a block of land at 325 Edinburgh Road in 1948, an address that would remain theirs for more than 50 years. In this post-war period materials were in short supply so the construction of their family home took a number of years. However, many, many wonderful

memories were created at 325 Edinburgh Road.

It is not hard to understand why Rita and Eric were attracted to



Rita Kaye in the 1990s

Castlecrag. However, they did not merely adopt this suburb, they adopted the entire community. Rita and Eric were active members of the Castlecrag Progress Association for more than 50 years, leading numerous community campaigns opposed to the construction of the proposed Warringah Freeway.

Rita and Eric devoted months to making presentations to and attending every day of the Inquiry into the future of the Warringah Freeway Corridor (the Kirby Inquiry) in 1982. Rita also worked tirelessly to raise funds for community projects such as the Castlecrag Kindergarten.

Rita took on the role of editor of *The Crag* in 1983 and shaped its style and character over the next five years. She was made a Life Member of the Progress Association in appreciation of all her work in our community.

She provided unstinting support for Eric during his eight years as Alderman and Deputy Mayor of Willoughby Council.

Another role in which Rita took immense personal pride was in the regeneration of Castlecrag's bushland.

The contribution which she made during her life - to her family, her community and to her husband - is substantial and lasting.

Luke Hastings



*Carols by Candlelight* at the Haven  
on Christmas Eve  
Wednesday 24th December

Castlecrag Progress Association

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 28 October 2003

Community Forum

Have Your Say on Local Concerns

(see pages 2-3)

All welcome

Community Centre at 8pm

Refreshments provided

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## Community Bytes

### Edinburgh Road Tree Plantings

In 2001, the Progress Association initiated discussions with Council officers for a Centenary of Federation project in Castlecrag to improve the presentation of Edinburgh Road by the planting of 'an avenue of locally indigenous trees'. We recently received a response from Council which provided a survey of the existing plantings, made recommendations on those that should be removed and provided a list of tree planting opportunities.

Details of this list will be made available at the Progress Association General Meeting on 28 October. Please come along and have your say on this project. All feed-back from residents will be recorded and incorporated into the Progress Association's response to the Council proposals.

### Council Elections 2004

You will be aware that Local Government elections were postponed from September 2003 to March 2004. For your information, the relevant dates are:

Close of Electoral Rolls	16 February 2004
Close of Nominations	16 February 2004
Postal voting opens	27 February 2004
Postal voting closes	22 March 2004
Pre-polling voting	15-26 March 2004
<b>Polling Day</b>	<b>27 March 2004</b>

### Castlecrag Web Page

The Progress Association urgently needs a volunteer to manage the Castlecrag Community website. If you have basic expertise in URL files and would like to help with this important community role, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Kate Westoby (9958 0215) or Kerry McKillop (9958 4516).

### Appeal for Photos and Video Tapes

The Haven Amphitheatre is building an archive of its 27 years of performances. The committee is appealing to local residents who may have photographs or video tapes of performances and other events at the amphitheatre, including construction work.

Any available material will be duplicated and returned to the owners. Please call Howard Rubie on 0418 648 870 if you are able to assist.



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## Civic Place Project



CIVIC PLACE

More than 2000 people have looked at the models, display panels and computer generated fly through of the new Civic Place since the exhibition opened in April.

At a recent consultative workshop, Willoughby historian Paul Storm suggested that the Civic Place would provide an ideal opportunity and setting to record the heritage of Willoughby City. The project team have taken this suggestion up and are seeking the views of community organisations on the elements of our heritage that might be permanently recorded in the Civic Place.

The Progress Association seeks your views on the key items of Willoughby heritage that should be conserved and presented at the Civic Place. Come along to the meeting on 28 October and have your say.

For information: [www.civicplace.com.au](http://www.civicplace.com.au)

## At the Haven



The Haven Amphitheatre with the Dylan Thomas Society are pleased to present the first-ever production of the Australian play for voices:

### Under Mulga Wood

By Will Christie

**Sunday, 2 November 2003 at 6.15pm**

This play for voices features many of Australia's well known professional actors, including Peter Sumner, Maggie Blinko, Barry Lan-grish, Hugh Wade and Neil Fitzpatrick.

**Tickets: \$20, concession \$15.**

As there is no parking at the theatre take the free shuttle bus from the Castlecrag shops. The bus service commences one hour before the performance. Ring Haven Hotline 9405 5078 or Howard Rubie 0418648870

## Low Levy 1914-2003

A number of Castlecrag residents attended the funeral of Low Levy on 11 September.

In 1925 Low Levy's parents made the life-changing decision to leave England with their three young children to make a new life in Australia. The family lived in the eastern suburbs, where Low attended local schools and showed an academic capacity which was to set in stone an unending search for and enjoyment of knowledge. He met his wife Anne in 1938 at a play group he and his brother had set up; they married and moved to Moratai Crescent in Castlecrag in the 1940s and had three children, Kate, Sandra and Peter. After war service Low completed an engineering degree and worked until his retirement at CIG. He then worked as a consultant with CIG and undertook a B.A. (Hons) degree.

Low had an acute political awareness and was an active participant in and supporter of causes for the betterment of mankind.

## Our Bushland Heritage

While the previous issue of *The Crag* highlighted the problem of vandalism, or at best thoughtlessness, in Griffin Reserves, there are positive stories too. Restoration of The Buttress Reserve has been achieved through careful consultation and planning, hard work and financial contributions of adjoining residents working with Council's bush regenerator, Pamela Batters - a lovely Yorkshire lass.

Over the past five years Pamela's skill and sheer, hard physical work has transformed a devastated, bamboo-infested wasteland into natural bushland complete with a dry, rock-lined creek that solves adjoining neighbours water run-off problems. Before planting was commenced all immediate neighbours were consulted extensively on the scale and form of flora so views would not be impeded and plantings were limited to those that would not exceed 6 metres.

The destruction of her caring, considered work was devastating and almost destroyed Pamela's motivation to continue, but I am pleased to report that she was back on the job in The Buttress Reserve this week, removing invading weeds and continuing her good work for the benefit of our community. We are indeed fortunate to have such a motivated person working for us, and she deserves our support and vigilance in nurturing and protecting Castlecrag's very special and unique bushland heritage.

John Steel

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# History of Castlecrag: Part 7

**1944** Portions of Warner's 'Waratah' dairy farm were subdivided. Warner's Estate No.1 is located in the suburb of Willoughby, while No.2 extends from Edinburgh Road, south side, to Sailors Bay Creek. Dairy sheds were located on this land up to 1938.

**1946** Castlecrag children began attending East Lindfield Public School.

**1946** The Cumberland County Council (CCC) was formed to oversee the future planning of Sydney's metropolitan area. The proposal for the **Express Route** from Manly to the city was taken up. In accordance with conventional thinking of the time, it was assumed that existing roads would be upgraded and used where possible. The Councils of Willoughby, North Sydney and Manly recommended a route along Strathallen Avenue, Eastern Valley Way, Edinburgh Road and then a bridge from Sugarloaf Point to Seaforth, while the CCC favoured a route along the foreshores of Northbridge and across the bluff at Seaforth.

**1947** The **Castlecrag Community Centre** was officially opened in November after years of effort by the community to raise funds and assist with construction. Edgar Deans had been instrumental in having the land set aside for the Centre. It initially housed the preschool.kindergarten (which continues to thrive), which had operated at the site since February 1946, and soon became a thriving centre of community life.

**1948** The CCC plans for the City to **Manly Express Route** were placed on public exhibition in March. Willoughby Council objected to the Northbridge route and, on 7 June, formally requested that the Castlecrag route be adopted.

**1949** In response to a request by the Minister for Local Government, the CCC dropped the Northbridge route for the City to Manly Express Route, leaving the Castlecrag route, which became known as the **Warringah Expressway**. The proposal to build the expressway along the northern escarpment of the Castlecrag peninsula and across Middle Harbour by a bridge off Sugarloaf Point caused dismay and outrage in the Castlecrag community. The Progress Association, led by its president Eric Nicholls, led 200 irate ratepayers to a Willoughby Council meeting to protest against Council's support for the route. It also presented a petition with over 1000 signatures opposing the proposal to the Minister for Local Government. It was the beginning of a long battle to protect the natural environment of Castlecrag from ill-conceived development.




Edinburgh Road near the present park in 1943 Rita Kaye

**1950** Another of the projects that the Progress Association had fought long and hard for finally became a reality when the **Castlecrag Infants School** was officially opened on 30 June with Una Puxley as its first teacher. It had been established as a result of community action and it was to become a centre of community life, with practically all the children of Castlecrag commencing their education in the kindergarten and Years 1 and 2 classes at the school.

**1951** The **Castlecrag Community Library**, housed in a new wing at the Community Centre, opened on 3 November. It had been formed at the annual meeting of the Community Circle in 1947 and a committee comprising Joan Stanton, Mrs Brett Hilder, Bim Hilder and Mrs and Mrs Walker set about the establishment of a free library. It was established under the Castlecrag and East Willoughby Co-operative Society. Pat Case was appointed as part-time librarian in July 1951, while Ernestine Claridge and Manfred Souhami catalogued the

collection according to the Dewey system. The library is now a branch of the Willoughby Public Library, staffed by volunteers. Long-service librarians included Beryl Small, Rita Kaye, Joyce Batterham, Addie Saltis, June Jones, Hade Spiegel, Anne Thomas, Billy Hume and Dorothy Fraser.

**Adrienne Kabos, James Weirick and Bob McKillop**



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### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2003 due 1 January 2003

I wish to renew / apply for membership of the CPA Inc., and enclose payment for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 per person; \$5 fixed income)

If you wish to make a donation, this will be most welcome. I enclose my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

Please post to the Treasurer: Diana Jones, 6/77 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag 2068 OR hand in at the Newsagency