

Community Notice Board

Community Organisations

Castlecrag Progress Association:

'Representing the Castlecrag Community'

General Meeting: Tuesday 23 October, 8pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Community Centre – all welcome (see pages 1 and 5).

CragSitters:

Family gathering at Stoker Playground, Sunday 9 December at 3.30pm (see page 2). *CragSitters* has been set up to give families the opportunity to network with each other and also provide contact with available babysitters in the area. New members, both families and babysitters are most welcome. Email: cragitters@yahoo.com.au

Walter Burley Griffin Society:

Annual General Meeting, Sunday 4 November, Castlecrag Community Centre at 2.30pm. Guest Speaker Scott Robertson on conservation of Griffin's Cheong House followed by inspection of the work. For more information phone Kerry on 9958 4516.



Community Events

Sydney Opera Society:

Saturday, 3 November at 1.30pm. Annual General Meeting with presentation by Liz Neilson on the *Pinchgut Opera*.

Presbyterian Church Hall, Corner Laurel and High Streets, Willoughby. For more information contact Nancy Fleming on 9958 3110.

Sally's Bookshop:

'Searching for a Poet Lorikeet'

Sunday afternoon poetry reading and social get together at the bookshop from 2.30pm (see page 2) 11 November. Bookings at the shop or ring: 9958 5007.

CampOver at The Haven:

A joint (ad)venture for children in Years 3-5 on 7-8 December sponsored by the 1st Northbridge Scouts, Castlecrag Progress Association and The Haven Amphitheatre, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Scouting (see page 4). Contact Mark on 9958 0125 or email thecrews5@bigpond.com.

Carols at The Haven:

The Christmas Eve Carols evening at The Haven are a popular community event. Monday 24 December at 6.30pm.

The Community Notice Board is a service by the Castlecrag Progress Association. Please contact editors@castlecrag.org.au with details of forthcoming events and activities for inclusion.

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THE CRAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CASTLECRAG PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION INC.

Eighty two years serving the community

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October 2007

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OUR NEXT MEETING:

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 23 October
7.30pm for 8.00pm

Celebrate the Community
Centre's 60th Birthday

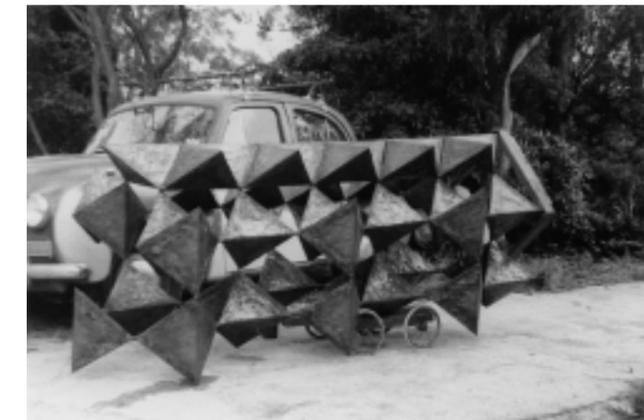
YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED to the
Community Centre, The Rampart
(down laneway near intersection with
The Postern).

The General Meeting will report
briefly on achievements and plans,
with the main focus of the evening
the celebration of our community
centre and some of the events that
have marked its role in Castlecrag.
See page 5 for more details.

7.30–8.00pm Wine-tasting and
refreshment.

8.00–9.15pm Presentation and
discussion

Castlecrag: a reflection on urban life in Australia



The design and construction of the Griffin Memorial Fountain was one of the many projects that brought the Castlecrag community together. Harry Fox took this photo of the Bim Hilder sculpture for the fountain awaiting erection in 1965. A pram undercarriage appears to have been commandeered to assist with the task – they made them sturdy in those days!

Castlecrag is one of four communities selected for an exploration of 'Life in the Australian city', one of ten broad themes governing the National Museum of Australia's (NMA) new permanent gallery due to open in August 2009.

The Creating a Country Gallery aims to represent the encounters of ideas, people and places that are signposts in the evolution of Australia's social, political and economic forms. The detailed explorations of particular places will reveal the circumstances that produced these historical encounters, locating them in their geographical and social contexts.

For the exhibit on the Australian city, the NMA has deliberately avoided an abstract centred on the usual themes of the colonial townscape, changes to transportation and the growth of suburbia. This exhibit, like all the others in the new gallery, considers its theme from the perspective of place. Castlecrag will stand alongside displays on Bennelong Point, suburban Brisbane in the late-nineteenth century and Rottne Island in Western Australia. Visitors will be encouraged to view each place as a particular reflection about how we have built our cities, how they have changed, and how we have responded to life in an urban environment.

The history of Castlecrag offers a fascinating way of exploring and reflecting on the ideas and values that have shaped our homes and our cities. An exhibit on Castlecrag has many tantalizing possibilities. Broadly speaking, the exhibit aims to introduce visitors to the Griffins'

social and architectural vision for a planned residential community. While the objects will tell how Marion and Walter went about building a unique suburban plan, visitors should leave with a strong sense of the Griffins' philosophical understanding of urban life, the fusion between the natural and built worlds and the kind of society they dreamed of fostering.

The Castlecrag exhibit will revolve around four major themes. The first will consider the creation of Castlecrag and the Greater Sydney Development Association (GSDA). Here the primary objects will be colourful advertising and promotional material held by the National Library and the fabulous cinema advertisement, Beautiful Middle Harbour. The second theme centres on the knitlock machines held by the National Museum of Australia. I have written elsewhere that on first sight of these wondrous machines, I was unsure if they were an elaborate steel clothing press or some kind of medieval torture device. Patented in 1919, Griffin first experimented with the knitlock system in Melbourne and intended to build knitlock homes in Canberra. Yet, it was at Castlecrag where the knitlock system began to take on a much broader cultural significance. It has come to embody both Griffin's idealism as well as his commitment to a practical, adaptable and democratic architecture.

The third theme heads inside to consider some of the values and attitudes inherent in the Griffins' approach to interior design. In 1912, the strong-willed Marion revealed

...continued on page 5

THINK LOCAL!

SHOP LOCAL!

EMPLOY LOCAL!

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the
Castlecrag Progress Association

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag NSW 2068

web page:
www.castlecrag.org.au

emails to the CPA:
info@castlecrag.org.au

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

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Community Bytes

Searching for a Poet Lorikeet,
11 November 2007

All Castlecrag residents are invited to a Sunday afternoon poetry reading get-together outside Sally's Bookshop at The Griffin Centre on 11 November from 2.30pm to 5-ish. Bring along a piece of poetry that you have written, or has special inspiration in your life. As it is also Remembrance Day, why not some poems on peace and sharing of the world? Of course, some humorous Patterson-style doggerel, or Wordsworth whimsy will be welcome ingredients. Seated out on the verandah we will start about 2.30, take a 30 minute interval at 3.30 for you to get some afternoon tea or some wine from our excellent local shops, then a final hour of entertainment.

All original works will be eligible for the title 'Poet Lorikeet', to be selected by a well-versed expert formerly with the Passionate Larks & Wild Night Servers, Lorraine Cairnes. Other prizes donated by your Progress Association will be awarded to junior poets, and poems of special merit.

While entry is FREE, in order to be assured of a seat, please phone our convenor Sally Crawford 9958-5007 or visit Sally's Bookshop to reserve a seat. Alternative arrangements will be made in case of wet weather or large numbers of participants. Why not book ahead with a Castlecrag restaurant to round off a wonderful afternoon and evening?

CragSitters

In August *CragSitters* arranged a night out

for its Mums at the Bai Yok Thai Restaurant in Castlecrag. This provided a great opportunity for the Mums to have a well deserved night off and meet some other locals. They suggested that we organise a night out for the Dads. So Dads, we will keep you posted on dates and venues.

A follow-up gathering for families was held at Stoker Playground on 9 September. Despite it being the APEC long weekend, we still had a number of families in attendance. The next gathering is planned for Sunday 9 December at 3.30pm, again at Stoker Playground in Edinburgh Road. We invite existing and new members to join us on the day.

New members, both families and babysitters are welcome to the group, so if you're a family who would like to find out more about the group or if you are interested in providing babysitting services, you can email us on cagsitters@yahoo.com.au

Sharie Kennedy-Wren

Community Notice Board

Council's notice board near the bus-stop outside The Quadrangle requires repair and the Progress Association has approached Council to attend to this. It also requires those using the board to follow some basic rules.

Please note the board has two sides: the eastern side is for display of notices from Willoughby Council and any of its formal sub-committees including The Haven Amphitheatre and Community Centre. The other side is for established community groups and public notices for local events. It is not for private commercial gain or



Council News

Prosecution for dog attack

Willoughby City Council successfully prosecuted a resident in North Sydney Local Court on 5 September 2007 for eight offences against the Companion Animals Act, 1998. The resident was fined a total of \$8600 for breaches of the Companion Animals Act in April 2007 when her two unidentified and unregistered dogs attacked and injured a neighbour's pet dog in The Scarp, Castlecrag. The court ordered the defendant to pay Willoughby City Council's professional costs of \$880 and court costs of \$560.

Willoughby Mayor Pat Reilly said: "Pet owners must ensure their dogs and cats are micro chipped and registered with dogs kept on a chain, cord or leash and under the effective control of a competent person when in a public place, unless visiting a designated off-leash area."

Rebecca Hill

CouncilCab Project

We reported Willoughby City's CouncilCab initiative in the May 2006 issue of *The Crag*. The service was conceived as a means of demonstrating the technical viability of an alternative public transport service able to respond to a diverse range of transport needs not met by existing bus services. Its long-term objective was to generate lessons to help progress such initiatives into 'mainstream' public transport services.

To this end, Council has monitored the first year of the trial and a report was presented to the Corporate & Transport Committee on 3 September 2003. Between May 2006 and April 2007, the service operated for some 900 hours, with a taxi hiring and administrative cost of \$57,300. During this

period, approximately 1920 vouchers were sold representing revenue of \$7680. This represents a cost to Council of \$49,620, against a budgeted cost of \$80,000. The service was patronised mainly by seniors, most of who no longer drive or have difficulties using other forms of transport. These older clients mainly use the service to get to medical appointments. Patronage was generally constant over the year, with the average number of passengers using it being seven per day.

Some 100 survey forms were distributed in April 2007 to solicit feedback about the CouncilCab service, with a response rate of 5.4%. These indicated that Chatswood and St Leonards were the most popular destinations, with 94% of users rating the service excellent or good. A significant majority wanted the service extended, both in terms of operating periods and area of coverage. Council has agreed to extend the trial period of the service to 1 July 2008 and to extend the operating period to include Saturdays.

David Sung

To book a CouncilCab ring 8332 8338 up to 7 days before your trip (and by 4pm the previous day). The service is for journeys within the Willoughby City area and operates between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Saturday. Payment is by voucher (\$20 for a book of five, available from the driver).

Councillor's viewpoint

My family and I are avid users of Willoughby's wonderful parks, bushland reserves and the great network of bush tracks and cycle ways. (Incidentally, Council has just updated a great brochure called Walking and wheeling in Willoughby, I highly recommend it if you want to discover some great walks in our city).

One thing that often irks me is the abandoned shopping trolleys that often seem to escape shopping centres and end up in our streets, parks and worst of all, our creeks. I have requested Council to put a motion at the 2007 Local Government Association Conference requesting that the State Government grant councils the

right to charge for the cost of recovery and disposal of shopping trolleys from public areas.

Currently the percentage of a retailer's trolleys which become 'lost' or stolen and end up in our environment and streets, are written-off as a business expense. However the full costs of the product, i.e. cradle-to-grave costs, are not being completely included in this economic analysis. The burden of the lost trolleys is being transferred to the public and the environment.

If local government can recover the costs of retrieving lost and abandoned trolleys from retailers it may just tip the economic balance in favour of preventing the trolleys being 'lost' in the first place.

The Spring Festival was back in Willoughby during September for its eleventh year running. The Festival gets bigger, better and more diverse each year. The Street Parade is the highlight and was held on Saturday 15 September, with dancers, musicians, sporting groups and many more weaving their way along Victoria Avenue, and showcasing fabulous talent within the Willoughby Community. One highlight was the temporary renaming of Anderson Street to Sustainability Street. On display were many inspirational and practical initiatives that can help us all to 'think globally and act locally'.

This coincided with the launch of Willoughby City Council's draft Sustainability Charter. It is the proposed policy which will oversee all Council's activities with a view to sustainability. It has three elements covering social, ecological and economic sustainability. It is a draft because we are seeking community comment on the policy before consideration of adopting it formally. Lots of words, but without doubt the most exciting, meaningful and positive initiatives I have had anything to with in my time on council. Check it out by typing 'sustainability charter' into the search field on Council's website (hard-copies are available from Council). Feedback is most welcome and it is open for comment until 8 January 2008.

Cr Adrian Cox
Sailors Bay Ward

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SHIRLEY FRANCIS 1923 – 2007

St James' Church, Castlecrag was filled to overflowing on 6 July for the thanksgiving service for the life of Shirley Francis. Shirley was well known in Castlecrag and Northbridge for her voluntary work in a number of different areas.

Shirley was born in Dunedin, New Zealand, the eldest of three girls. The war years saw Shirley working in radar for the New Zealand Army. Perhaps this led to her early career as an Air Hostess (as they were known as in those days!).

Shirley and Bill saw Castlecrag as a great place to bring up a family and they bought a block of land from Jim Young in The Parapet in the early 1950s. Their four children were among the many 'baby boomers' who enjoyed the life of the Crag community, with them all retaining close friends from those early years and two of the boys even marrying Castlecrag girls!

From her early years in Castlecrag, Shirley gave unstintingly of her time and care to her neighbours and friends. As one of her friends said, 'If Shirley took you under her wing, you knew that you would be well looked after'.

That time and care was extended to those in the Northbridge Valley Women's Bowling Club from the 1970s. Shirley contributed to bowling in many ways, eventually becoming a state umpire and coach and working with the disabled, so that they too could enjoy bowling.

The Francis Family

DA for electronic gate at 1 The Bulwark

The Progress Association has expressed concerns regarding a recent development application (DA) for the erection of an electronic gate on the private road from the end of The Bulwark to Edinburgh Road. This private road was constructed some 50 years ago as part of a subdivision that created a number of new residential allotments at the end of The Bulwark, giving these new allotments alternative access from both The Bulwark and Edinburgh Road.

The history of this road and the concerns of its owners regarding the use of this road by outsiders was covered in an article by The Bulwark Private Road Association in The Crag No. 90 of October 1993. This pointed out that the Private Road Association had no objection to use of the private road by pedestrians, but asked for respect of the rights of the owners of the road by unauthorised vehicles not using the road to access Edinburgh Road. It also noted that ownership of the private road had been offered to Council but that this offer was declined at that time.

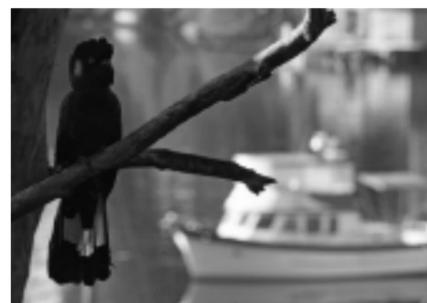
The proposal to erect an electronic gate may well be the result of frustration by the applicant over 'unauthorised use' of the road by vehicles, but it also has significant implications for other residents on the private road and for a much wider area. The concern of the Progress Association is that the erection of such a gate has public safety implications for the wider neighbourhood.

There have been a number of incidents of blockage in The Bulwark or The Bastion preventing vehicle access to an area covering some 200 properties from a variety of causes such as trees or power lines blown

down by storm, roadworks, vehicle accidents, vehicle breakdown etc. In these cases there is no alternative access to the area by public road and the private road has provided an essential de facto alternative vehicle access. Therefore, this alternative access for emergency vehicles such as ambulance, fire brigade, police and emergency services must be maintained.

The Progress Association has made a submission to Council asking Council to refuse the current development application to erect an electronic gate across the private road, to ensure that this private road remains open for emergency access. The Progress Association believes that the availability of this roadway as alternative emergency access for such a large area of Castlecrag means that it should be brought into public ownership and it has asked Council to initiate the required actions to bring this into effect.

**Peter Moffitt, Vice-President,
Castlecrag Progress Association**



A yellow-tailed black cockatoo spotted outside our kitchen. Photo: Niki Hughes, The Barricade.

Community Bytes cont...

advertising of events outside Castlecrag, or Willoughby, or personal notices of lost pets or possessions. Notices should be kept to A4 or A5 size.

Roger Page Real Estate kindly holds the keys as a community service to the people of Castlecrag. Please show them the proposed poster before asking for the key, and comply with the rules as to content.

Awards to Local Residents

Congratulations to Antoinette McSharry, who was commended by the judges of this year's Willoughby Art Prize for her painting *A Day in my Life, Sailors Bay* in the Willoughby Resident Award sponsored by Willoughby City Council.

The coveted Sheads First National Real Estate 2D Award for Painting & Mixed Media was won by 92-year old Aboriginal painter Loongkoonan from the Kimberley Region of Western Australia for her *Bush Tucker in Nyirina Country*.

And Congratulations to Valda Wilson who has been awarded the Best Soprano Award at this year's McDonald's Performing Arts Challenge.

Boatshed Centenary

The Sailors Bay Park Boatshed celebrates its centenary this year. The first boatshed at the foot of Rockley Street in Sailors Bay Park was leased in 1907 for a Mr Bob Carr (no known relation of a recent NSW Premier). This was a popular place for families to picnic and hire rowing skiffs for exploring the foreshores or quietly paddling canoes, as we still do today.

Special Thanks

The Castlecrag community extends special thanks to:

Council's Trades Supervisor Mark Supple and painters Frank and Tony Hecimovic for their recent restoration of the noticeboard at The Griffin Centre. The work demonstrates meticulous rust removal and stabilisation, while the former 'Heritage Green' has been replaced with 'Eucalypt Green'.

The Bai Yok Thai Restaurant for its donation of 137 items of crockery, including 70 large plates, 14 serving platters and 30 coupes. These can be hired cheaply for Castlecrag events by contacting us at: info@castlecrag.org.au

The Haven Notice: Shuttle buses

Do you have a light-rigid bus, mini-bus, people-mover or large car that could help for half-an-hour before and after an event at The Haven amphitheatre? Do you currently hold an 'LR' (Light Rigid) licence?

The Haven is looking for volunteers in this area – even occasional help would be a tremendous assistance. Naturally there would be free admissions to shows and other rewards. Phone Howard Rubie on 0418 648 870 if you can help.

President's musings

At time of writing, a Federal Election date is anticipated soon. It raises the issue of what is Castlecrag's place in the process and final result? How does our little peninsula with 2000 voters, including 130 first-timers, engage with the issues? Does healthy scepticism too often slide into nihilistic cynicism?

Your Progress Association is non-party political. Of its 12 committee members, only two are members of political parties, while another five actively campaign on particular issues; all 12 are scattered across the political spectrum.

Historically, Castlecrag residents had a keen interest in ideas and beliefs. Many thought it impolite to be overtly political, so there was little public campaigning. But this didn't stop active discussion over afternoon tea or a quiet beer. After the Depression and World War II, Australia's increasing prosperity eased earlier tensions between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. Here, residents' focused on raising new families and providing community facilities, usually with the emphasis on building things together. Indeed the then new Castlecrag Infants School had the multi-meaning motto, *'Together we grow'*.

Tensions increased in the 1960s with the Vietnam war, conscription and the women's movement. New political parties emerged, with major inputs from local residents. At the same time, disrespect and cynicism increased towards governments generally: 'Go to the candidates' debates; Laugh about it, Shout about it, When you come to choose; Any way you look at it, – you lose' (to quote Simon & Garfunkel's hit song, 'Mrs Robinson').

Over the last 20 years, Australians have been living through four revolutions at once:

1. 'Gender', resetting roles and responsibilities;
2. 'Information', blurring the distinction between human communication and mere data transfer;

3. 'Cultural-identity', – Orstrylians Orll?; and
4. 'Economic (ir-)rationalism' and its decreasing certainty in employment.

For many residents, there was a sense of 'disengagement' from national issues, and retreat into self-centred, less compassionate, controllable activities in the backyard.

Today, as a highly educated suburb, we should be able to lead by example: how to restore the work/life balance; how to encourage wise moral choices rather than freedom-reducing regulation; how to strengthen an individual's sense of identity and emotional security by re-invigorating communal connections.

So let's get engaged – in the National elections. We all need to research the issues, discuss with others and offer to help a preferred candidate. It's fun handing out and recycling How-To-Votes at the Community Centre – we are all friends whatever our allegiances; and it's better than political parties importing hired-hands!

How should the thoughtful voter decide? In the 1990s, many of us promoted the concept of 'triple bottom-line accounting' for major corporations and governments. It referred to examining the social AND environmental AND economic results of the entity – the whole of its impact on society – not just its net financial profits and assets owned. Accountants calculate the 'Profit and Loss' for a defined period, and the 'Balance Sheet' of assets and liabilities, a snapshot of the company's health at period end. This is also a useful framework for examining social and environmental performance, using words rather than numbers to identify and measure what Australia has gained and lost over the term, and where we might aspire to be in three, six and nine years time.

So, let's try to rewrite those lyrics above for 2007: 'When you come to choose, Pick the ones that represent your views.'

Bruce Wilson

Our Home Business Classifieds

Are you running a small business, consultancy or service from your home here in Castlecrag? Perhaps a part-time role while in child-rearing mode, or in part-retirement, or life-style choice?

As part of our "Think local; Shop local" policy, your Progress Association is developing a 'Classifieds' listing, formally commencing in the February 2008 issue. Our aim is to foster local contact, encourage walking, reduce unnecessary travel out of the suburb, and reduce hours wasted searching for professional, technical or other assistance.

Is this your opportunity to start up a micro-business? For example, purchase and delivery from the Castlecrag shops for residents confined to home? Tutoring school and university students? Music training? Odd jobs? Small outdoor or indoor tasks? Soft furnishings? Minor repairs?

We will also consider running it as a page on the website www.castlecrag.org.au

The format is still being finalised, but is likely to simply be the keyword of the type of business, brief descriptor, name (optional) and contact phone/email address, maybe hours. The cost will be \$10 for a single entry or \$20 in three issues of The Crag. As with all normal ads, the editors reserve the right to decline any proposed advertisement.

Contact Simone by email at simone_selby@hotmail.com or by writing c/- CPA PO Box 4259, Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag 2068.

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60 years at St James



The spire of St. James Church, Edinburgh Road.
Photo: Bob McKillop

Each community group and organisation is founded on shared aspirations and beliefs and a common purpose. As each group interacts with the wider populace and other groups, it helps weave the rich fabric that makes a vibrant community tapestry. Accordingly even those who do not endorse every belief of another group have reason to celebrate its achievements as a contribution to the greater good of the community.

On Sunday 22 July, the congregation of St James Church welcomed all Castlecrag residents, via its new wheelchair accessible entrance, to celebrate the 60th ('Diamond') Anniversary of the first Church of England (now Anglican) service in Castlecrag. (A "church" refers to a body of people professing the same Christian creed, not merely the edifice for public Christian worship.)

Originally in the Parish of St Thomas', North Sydney, the Castlecrag area became the responsibility of St Stephen's Willoughby, when that Church was founded. Archdeacon. H.S. Begbie became Rector of St Stephen's in 1921 and soon purchased land in Willoughby and Castlecrag. The

Castlecrag site was on the corner of Edinburgh Road and The Parapet, but was subsequently sold when a new minister took over at St Stephen's.

There were no services in Castlecrag until July 1947 when 16 people assembled at the home of Jack and Dorothy O'Connor. Worship at this venue continued for seven years. The name St James was chosen as younger brother of St John, the Willoughby sibling church. A Parents and Friends Association was also formed, making thousands of cakes and bottles of jam to raise funds for the Sunday School and proposed church building. By August 1949 a Building Fund was established and by April 1950, thanks to the generosity of Mr FW Turton, the rocky site on 184-186 Edinburgh Road was acquired.

On 24 July 1954, the lower church hall was opened and dedicated by Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia, the Most Reverend HWK Mowll. This building served as a church, Sunday school and concert hall and centre of community activities. By 1956, the congregation had outgrown it and every Anglican family was approached for donations enabling a decision to build a new building and acquire adjoining land for a future church centre.

The present Church was designed by local architect John Brindley and features the acclaimed Bim Hilder foyer mural depicting scenes from Apostle James' life. In November 1969 the Church Centre was dedicated by Bishop Hulme-Moir, a fitting climax to the work of Rev CE Reynolds, his planners and builders. The large debt incurred was repaid via musical comedies organized by Dorothy O'Connor with local youth, and Annual Art Shows organized by June and Barry Raymond. In 1987, St James Church was finally consecrated by the Bishop of North Sydney, the Right Rev D Cameron.

At the present, services are held at 8am each Sunday and the Sunday school has recently re-opened under the guidance of our youth worker Richard Sercombe. Bishop Peter Watson is the interim minister until Rev Robert Cameron arrives in February 2008. Each Christmas members carry out 'Operation Caring Christmas' delivering small cakes and similar 'goodies' to

residents who are unable to get out. If you would like to receive, or to give, please contact St James' members.

Today, St James' elegant design in light face-brick and stone tower topped by an unadorned wooden cross, floodlit at night, is a pleasing landmark and symbol of community cooperation that welcomes all. Please contact us on 9958 4377.

**Bev Westwood and Esther Leslie,
with Bruce Wilson**

CampOver at the Haven 7 December

ATTENTION! All boys and girls currently in School Years 3, 4 and 5.

Have you ever thought about running away from home – just for one night? Here is your chance!

Come and enjoy a 'CampOver at The Haven' on Friday 7 December 2007.

Try a local bushwalk with bush experts; team games; making things; and a singalong around a real campfire, then yummy supper, a didgeridoo dreaming, swagtime story-telling, and a sleep under the trees and stars. (We'll invite the possums down for dessert!)

Imagine waking up all refreshed to hear the beautiful dawn songs of the birds while tucked up warm and snug in your own swag. Sniff the scents of blossom and eucalypt in the morning dew – and a hot breakfast and toast cooking on an open fire.

This is a not-for-profit, joint (ad)venture sponsored by the Castlecrag Progress Association, The Haven Amphitheatre, and 1st Northbridge Scouts to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of International Scouting. The charge is only \$15 each for this great experience.

To enquire further or reserve a place (strictly 30 runaways only) email: Scout Leader Mark thecrews5@bigpond.com or ring 9958 0125.

Sailors Bay Track



Sailors Bay Creek just below The Palisade.
Photo: Matthew Keighery

Watergate Reserve, the largest Reserve in the Griffin subdivision has a new track linking The Barbette and The Redoubt via Sailors Bay Creek with The Outpost in Northbridge. Recent signs erected by Willoughby City Council have dubbed it the Sailors Bay Track. They also link it with the Griffin Federation Track at Keep Reserve in The Rampart. The new track was funded by the NSW Government and Willoughby Council.

I read an article recently about Marion Mahony Griffin, wife of Walter, in which she is quoted as saying to artist Bernard Hesling when looking across to Northbridge from Castlecrag: 'it's hoorabul, hoorabul. Wahlter an' I wanna keep the Crag voigin bush'. She was also, in the words of residents, known to get around the rocky terrain of Castlecrag 'like a mountain goat'. The new, beautifully constructed, track is steep and rough, so whilst you don't need to walk like a billygoat it isn't a track for everyone. It does however provide splendid opportunities to immerse yourself in the Griffin vision, have a sense of

'voigin' bush and enjoy views across to Northbridge.

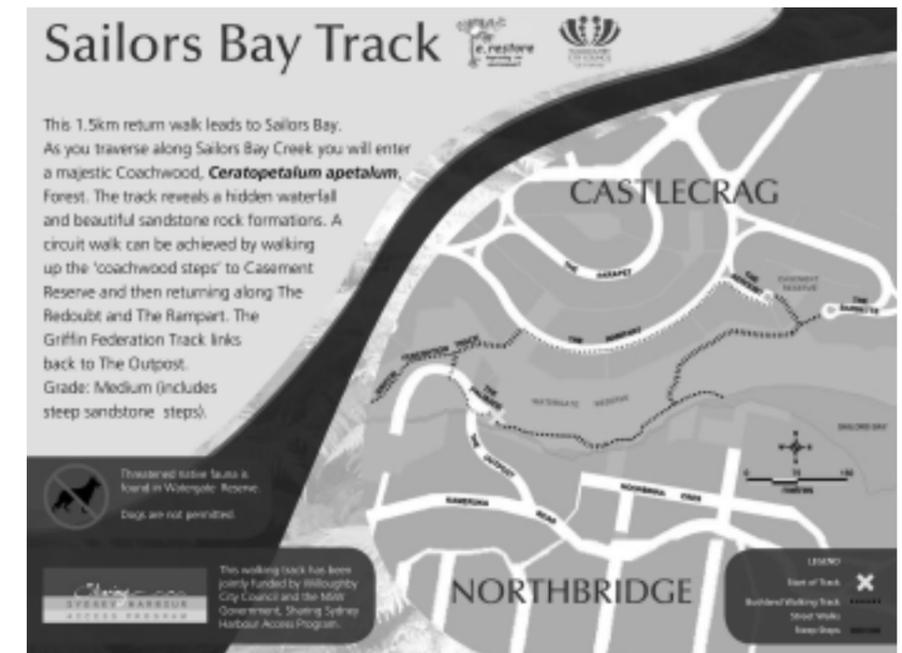
To access the new track, go to the end of either The Redoubt or The Barbette and follow the signs. The bush at the top is a delightful mix of Christmas Bush and Angophoras. The track then descends steeply to Sailor's Bay Creek and a large tranquil forest of Coachwood Trees, a cousin of Christmas Bush, and a once important timber for the construction of coaches and the butts of 303 rifles. From the creek the track can be followed east to Sailors Bay before continuing west along the creek to The Outpost.

Ian Rannard, in his excellent history of Willoughby's Market Gardens, says that his father, himself a market gardener of the land across Eastern Valley Way, always said that the track along the Creek was an old aboriginal track. Whilst you often see Eastern Water Dragons and eels, Ian also remembers Long Neck Turtles in the Creek. With development impending at The Market Gardens and also Northbridge Plaza, there is considerable scope to improve the health of the Creek. With community support for

these outcomes perhaps it will once again support the Long Neck. Another delight as you head up the Creek is to commonly see Blue Wrens which are so conspicuously absent closer to our houses.

The new track was identified as a desired outcome in the 1996 Willoughby City Council Griffin Reserves Plan of Management (POM). This POM has resulted in action plans being drawn up and work undertaken in many of our reserves. These plans are the result of direct community consultation under the guidance of The Griffin Reserves Advisory Group. This group consists of a Council officer, a Councillor and residents including myself who live adjacent to Reserves, and we meet four times a year with additional site inspections between meetings. A public forum on the Griffin Reserves and Walkways is being planned for March 2008. It should be a great opportunity for all residents to express their wishes in regard to the Griffin Reserves, the road islands and pathways. In the meantime walk the Sailors Bay Track and enjoy the 'voigin' bush.

Matthew Keighery



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Castlecrag: future directions?



Participants at the CPA Forum socialising before the meeting. Photo: Bob McKillop

Some 36 Castlecrag residents – new faces, ‘old hands’ and new residents – participated in a public forum at the Progress Association General Meeting at the community centre on 21 August to discuss what they wished to see in our community over the coming 5-10 years. As expected, such an event brought forward a range of views, but there were also key themes of agreement.

One theme was that Castlecrag’s unique architecture and natural bushland setting have been major drawcards to those who have come to settle here; both for recent arrivals and those who have been here for longer periods. They spoke of the wonderful environment the suburb offers for adults and children alike – of the walking tracks to explore our bushland and harbour vistas, the many examples of innovative buildings that fit snugly into the natural environment, the improvements in children’s playgrounds and the range of voluntary groups that enrich our community. There was strong agreement that a key challenge for us all is to protect our built and natural environment and the community-based services that we currently enjoy. Our community library was singled out as a service that requires strong support from residents in order to survive.

The efforts of the community, through the Progress Association and other community groups, to protect and conserve Castlecrag’s unique heritage over the years,

often in the face of strong opposition by some, was identified as a key factor in maintaining Castlecrag as the ‘special place’ that its residents enjoy today. Several speakers identified the trend towards large houses that dominate the landscape as a major threat to the suburb’s character and natural environment. It was pointed out, however, that while there is a need for constant vigil to ensure that development applications (DAs) comply with Council controls, it has been heartening to see that the proportion of non-complying DAs has diminished in recent years. Nevertheless, factors such as ignorance of the special features of the suburb, aspirations for grander mansions and/or pressure on Willoughby Council to process DAs against time targets mean that unsatisfactory proposals continue to be put forward.

The village atmosphere that has emerged in our shopping centre over recent years was highlighted by several contributors as a special feature of Castlecrag, although it was felt that further steps could be made to improve the social amenities of the area. Some saw this in terms of improvements to the built environment at the entrance to the suburb; others felt that the enhancement should be made through more trees and shrubs in the streetscape. There was general concern that Council has not been sufficiently vigilant in monitoring the ‘tree butchers’ from electricity companies who mangle street trees in the name of

‘pruning’. There was also general agreement that more should be done to protect large trees in the suburb, both on private property and in the reserves.

A number of participants felt that residents should seek to be more sustainable by shopping locally rather than undertaking excessive car travel to other shopping facilities. Of the present range of goods and services, the present inability to purchase Travel10 bus tickets at our local shops was raised as a concern, while a good health food shop was identified as a need. Poetry readings and wine tasting events at our local bookshop and restaurants were identified as possible activities to strengthen interaction between local residents and the business community, while design improvements at the Quadrangle were suggested to make it a more welcoming place for people. A grander suggestion was the possibility of a co-operative business in a local shop that brought a wider range of activities to our shopping centre on a rotational basis (eg Thai noodle nights) and fostered closer interaction between community and business.

The Haven Amphitheatre was highlighted as ‘the jewel in the crown’ of our social agenda, but its management committee is constantly looking for ideas on the kind of events that should be held there to ensure its programs are relevant to the community. The recent Australia Day street parties in The Bulwark, The Scarp and The Battlement were put forward as examples of positive initiatives that helped to bring residents together and make newcomers feel welcome. Linden Way and parts of Edinburgh Road were also put forward as examples of this activity.

We would like to hear further suggestions from Castlecrag residents and businesses on the activities and improvements you would like to see in our community in the short- to medium-term. Please write to The Crag, PO Box 4259, Castlecrag 2068 or email us at: editors@castlecrag.org.au.

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Castlecrag: a reflection on urban life in Australia

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something of her attitude to cluttered, over furnished homes (amongst other things!) when she wrote:

The confusion to which we doom ourselves when we use figured wall papers, figured rugs, figured curtains, figured upholstery, is responsible for much of the weariness of the women who spend so much of their time in the house, for peevishness of children...and for [the] crouchiness of men who need rest when they come home from a day's work...

A spartan Griffin designed desk and lampshade will be key objects in this part of the exhibit.

The final theme has a strong accent on the community of Castlecrag, both in the past and in recent times. Visitors to the gallery should sense the continuity between the Griffins’ vision and the current residents of Castlecrag who continue to celebrate this historical legacy. Few objects convey this with more force than the giant puppets of Walter and Marion. Like the other places being explored in the Australian Cities exhibit, Castlecrag will not be presented in some kind of historical time-warp, dislocated from present day concerns. Indeed, it is the continuities as well as the disjunctions with the past that will make for a fascinating, relevant and lively exhibit. In this vein, I look forward to recording (in a format to be determined) some stories about life in Castlecrag, life in a Griffin home, what attracted people to the area, and most importantly, some of the issues the suburb faces today.

**Daniel Oakman, Curator
National Museum of Australia**



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Celebrate the Community Centre’s 60th birthday

Mark your diary now:

Tuesday 23 October, 7.30pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre

Come along and join in an evening to celebrate the Centre’s 60th birthday. This will also be a General Meeting of your Progress Association to briefly report back to you on achievements and plans, but the main focus will be a celebration of our community centre and some of the events that have marked its role in Castlecrag.

The Castlecrag Community Centre was officially opened in November 1947 after years of effort by the community to raise funds and to assist with construction. Community gatherings in the 1920s to 1940s had been in homes with a large room or in the basement of The Griffin Centre. In 1944 the Castlecrag Community Circle and other local organisations resolved to build a community centre and to administer a kindergarten. The Castlecrag and East Willoughby Community Advancement Co-operative Society Limited was incorporated to oversee this ambitious project. The Greater Sydney Development Association (GSDA) Limited donated the land, and that land was transferred to Willoughby Municipal Council (to avoid rates).

Architect Eric Nicholls’ design allowed for a nucleus hall capable of later extension. Residents banded together to physically clear the land, dig trenches for drains and foundations and to erect a shelter-shed. Fund raising activities were matched pound-for-pound by Willoughby Council. Despite building material shortages, legal complications and some vandalism, the community centre was opened in November 1947, with four days of celebrations!

The centre initially housed the preschool

kindergarten (which continues to thrive), which had operated at the site since February 1946, while a new wing housing the library was officially opened on 3 November 1951. By 1965, when upkeep exceeded rentals, the Co-op was wound up and the building taken over by Willoughby Council who appointed a management committee of local residents to administer the centre. The Kindergarten Union (KU) is now the dominant user. Recent extensions and outdoor refurbishments have created a delightful oasis for any community event. If you wish to use the centre for a function, bookings may be made via Warwick Hutchison on 9958 4230.

All Castlecrag residents are encouraged to come along to celebrate this important event. Bring a plate with snacks and a bottle of your favourite beverage and join in the activities. The Progress Association will also provide refreshments.

Willoughby Men’s Shed

The Willoughby Men’s Shed was officially opened on 26 July. Situated in the Northbridge RSL hall (down near the Northbridge Golf Club) the shed is fully decked out with brand new equipment such as table saws, wood and metal lathes, band saws and a state of the art dust extraction system to keep it all crisp and clean.

Any ‘blokes’ out there who have a project lurking on the back-burner or simply want to while away some time with like minded fellows should contact Council’s Help Line on 9777 1000. Experienced hands are on deck to ensure you keep yours safe and sound.

**Cr Adrian Cox
Sailors Bay Ward**

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