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OUR NEXT MEETING:

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 26 February
7.30pm for 8.00pm

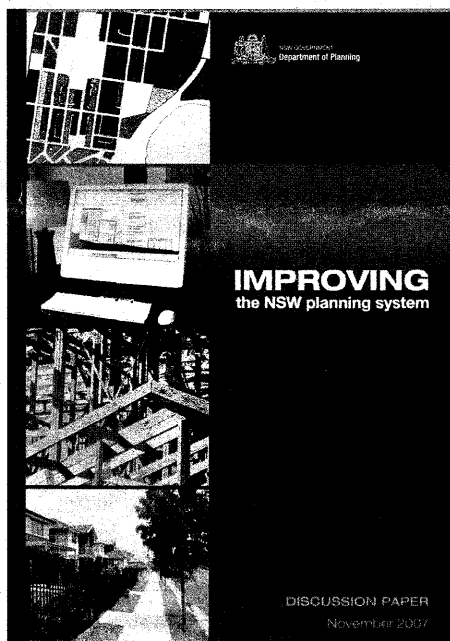
**A Sustainable Future for
Willoughby: Council's
Sustainability Charter and
e-Restore levy**

Guest Speaker:

Dr Haydn Washington
Willoughby City Council
Director, Sustainability Projects

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

Improving the NSW Planning System – a potential threat to Castlecrag?



NSW Minister for Planning, The Hon. Frank Sartor, has released a Discussion Paper (title above) sketching proposed 'reforms' to the NSW planning system at State and Local levels. It has enthusiastic support from the Coalition for Planning Reform, an alliance of 14 major development industry and planning organisations. However the 152 Councils of the Local Government Association and the Shires Association, community groups and individuals have grave reservations and suspicions.

The Castlecrag Progress Association has long argued for more consistent and simple criteria for decision-making in planning and development proposals, but shares LGA's concerns. Specifically, all local Progress Associations are joining LGA's call for a proper consultation period, aiming to settle non-contentious reforms by July and the rest by December.

This article spans the 142 page proposal and its impacts on Castlecrag residents, homes and amenity. Our planning sub-committee has researched a more detailed article (enclosed) for consideration by the Committee which I urge you to read. Issues include:

Aims for the Planning system: The Paper seeks to encourage more sustainable developments, to be transparent and accountable; to ensure the economic use of

resources and time; to achieve consistency and simplicity with clear agreed systems for decision-making; and to ensure an equal and fair approach to all decisions for all participants. These generalities are unexceptionable; it is the proposed methods that are causing concern.

Plan-making: Three levels of 'Environmental Planning Instruments', State, regional and local government, govern land use and economic development in NSW. Their effectiveness depends on consistency between the different levels, the quality of the plans, their clarity for ease of use and the effectiveness of their application 'on the ground'. Your Progress Association supports the principle that planning instruments and development controls need to be clear and definitive; that we residents need to know what we are permitted to do—and what developers are permitted to do. We also believe that effective plan-making requires high levels of community participation, as it is a prime object of the Environmental Protection & Assessment Act: 'to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment'. The Paper is not clear as to whether future plan-making would require public consultation, or whether a Council would be able to amend the Planning Department's standard template LEP to address the special needs of a local area.

Development assessment and review: The Paper aims to move to a 'tailored assessment system' that depends on the scale, risk and complexity of local environmental plans and development projects. Developments for single dwellings and alterations less than \$1 million are deemed 'minor'. Criteria for 'exempt' and 'complying' development would be revised to 'achieve fast and simple approvals for single dwellings and other minor developments and to take volume out of the assessment system' in order to increase the proportion of DA's in these categories from 10 per cent to 50 per cent within four years. Where a DA is assessed to be fully 'complying' with the applicable code, a certifier (council or private) may approve the development. A courtesy note is proposed to notify affected neighbours and there would be no right of appeal for complying development. New procedures are set out

...continued on page 5

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the
Castlecrag Progress Association

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag NSW 2068

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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

Griffin Reserves Community Forum

What do you know about our reserves, walkways and road islands incorporated by Walter Burley Griffin into his landscape plan for what is now the Castlecrag Conservation Area, and their ongoing management? Here is your chance to learn about this unique feature of our suburb. Willoughby City Council invites all Castlecrag residents to a community forum on Thursday 6 March 2008 at the Community Centre. The Forum will address the significance of the Griffin Reserve System, provide a briefing on the restoration works that have been completed over the past ten years and discuss future management issues. The guest speaker will be James Weirick, Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of New South Wales and a leading scholar on the Griffins' work. This is a special opportunity to become better informed about the Griffin Reserve System and to raise matters relating to their future management.

Sally's Bookshop

Sally Crawford's bookshop has become a special retreat for many Castlecrag residents and visitors to our suburb since Sally and her team relocated their business here in November 2006. Since then they have become an important part of our community, hosting several book launches, a children's reading activity at the Community Fair and, most recently, the successful 'Poet Lorikeet' event (see page 7). Sally has recently advised us that she plans to retire from the book and gift selling business and she has reluctantly offered the

two businesses for sale. She has asked us to express her gratitude for the support and friendship she has enjoyed here in Castlecrag, and her sadness to be leaving at this time.

I am sure that readers of *The Crag* will join us in wishing Sally all the best in her future endeavours. We are aware that the bookselling business has become very competitive in recent years, but remain hopeful that a local 'white knight' may come forward at least to maintain a delightful bookshop in our midst.

Chicago Art Institute Director at Castlecrag

Jack Perry Brown, Director of the Ryerson & Burnham Libraries at the Art Institute of Chicago, was the guest of the Walter Burley Griffin Society on 19 and 20 January. Following a guided tour of Griffin sites in the northern suburbs on the Saturday, Jack was given a tour of our suburb before lunching with members of the WBGS committee. He then presented a public lecture at the Haven Amphitheatre on the Art Institute's exciting project that has published Marion Mahony Griffin's grand work, *The Magic of America*, on the net. Completed last August, the web version of this important architectural document collates 1400 pages of text and some 650 accompanying illustrations from the three known copies of the work.

Jack Brown delivered an inspiring lecture, noting the brilliant ambience of the Haven for the subject and focused on the key elements of Marion's work that relate to Castlecrag. These can be summarised in three key themes: the architecture and



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Community Bytes cont...

landscape planning principles of Walter Burley Griffin; the relationship of the Griffins to our natural environment; and Marion's care for and love of the children of Castlecrag. For more information about *The Magic of America* project please visit the 'News' page of the WBGS website at: www.griffinsociety.org

Clean Up Australia Day at Castlecrag

The Castlecrag community will be an active participant in Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 2 March 2008. The focus will be to remove rubbish and plastic in Retreat Reserve and on the Griffin Foreshore. Please come along on between 9am and 1pm wearing long pants and sleeves, and bring gardening gloves, hat and insect repellent.

There are two meeting sites. The First Sailors Bay Sea Scout Group will meet in the car park at the end of Rockley Street, and Terese Hayward has organised a meeting place at the top of the drive at 68 The Bulwark (Hayward). A barbeque and drinks will be provided at the Haywards during this event.

Please contact Edward Coates (Sea Scout Group) at janinecoates@optusnet.com.au or Terese on phone 9958 4331 for further details. You can also check the webpage: <http://events.cleanup.org.au/?Retreat+Reserve>

Nancy Fleming's 90th Birthday

On 19 January some 150 friends gathered at the Castlecrag Community Centre to celebrate Nancy Fleming's 90th birthday and to honour her contribution to our community. Organised by her children Andrew and Lesley, grandchildren and friends Kate Westoby and Muschi Hruska, it was a most enjoyable event. Andrew provided a short audio-visual presentation of Nancy's career, followed by short speeches about Nancy's professional work as a social worker and her many contributions to the Castlecrag community during 52 years of residence here. We learnt that Nancy loves music, dancing and a good party, and that she has played a leading role in the formation and work of the Sydney Opera Society. Her house was always open for community activities and it became a temporary refuge for a Sydney tram (now safely stored at the Tram Museum).

President's musings

Welcome back. Did New Year's Eve 2008 find you 'healthy and wealthy and wise'? Those who holidayed at home deserve to be a little smug. Pity the travellers who battled airports and car queues, or were washed out up north or deep fried down south.

So what are the 2008 Grand Plans for our 1100 households and our little peninsular community as a whole? Will they be dented if the world economy slows, pollution increases and social cohesion diminishes? And what is the best response? Hide in the gated fortress and pedal the treadmill faster?

Should a whole community like Castlecrag also establish its New Year's resolutions? What small plans can we meaningfully achieve by the end of December 2008? The October issue of *The Crag* reported that the National Museum of Australia has chosen Castlecrag as a topic for a whole exhibit in 2009. The suburb's last 80 years have been interesting, sometimes unique, often eccentric. Sadly we have few living links with long ago. So, what about here and now—and what might Castlecrag be like in, say, 2020? More fortresses? More treadmills? More earplugged, downturned faces trudging to nowhere?

Or join together in building a '2020 vision' to replace the myopic near-term goals. Will it be a vision for happy voices and foot-worn paths linking friends and families; leading by example and systematically reducing our household's carbon footprint and energy wastage; improving shared facilities; and/or weaving even brighter colours into our social fabric? Remember: Together We Grow.

As documented in our lead article, you also need to consider how proposed changes to the NSW planning system will affect you and your neighbourhood. The 1979 Planning Act's objects include 'to provide **increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment**' (emphasis added). Unfortunately it seems indisputable that the new planning proposals will substantially reduce opportunity for you to protect the value and amenity of your home, your neighbourhood and your community. Many will recall the 2005 amendments (Part 3A) to empower the Minister of the day to 'call in' selected

major projects for Ministerial decision without public discussion. Such reductions are contrary to the Minister's promise of a 'more accessible and transparent process for all members of the community'. They can lead to unhealthy allegations, and wasted time and effort that could have been better invested in finding the best long-term development option. Most of the 95 recommendations have desirable objectives, but few present an effective and trustworthy path to implementation. Please write now to Minister Sartor and Premier Lemmon supporting the Local Government Association's request for an extended timetable for consultation.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts (and raising a small glass) at our first 2008 Community General Meeting at the Community Centre on Tuesday 26 February (see Notice on page 1). Everyone is welcome (and bring a neighbour and a plate).

Bruce Wilson

Earth Hour 2008

On 31 March 2007, 2.2 million people and 2,100 Sydney businesses turned off their lights for one hour—Earth Hour. This massive collective effort reduced Sydney's energy consumption by 10.2% for one hour, which is the equivalent effect of taking 48,000 cars off the road for one hour. With Sydney icons like the Harbour Bridge and Opera House turning their lights off, and unique events such as weddings by candlelight, the world took notice. Inspired by the collective effort of millions of Sydneysiders, many major global cities are joining Earth Hour in 2008, turning a symbolic event into a global movement.

Earth Hour 2008 will be held at 8pm on 29 March when a number of cities from across the globe will join the Earth Hour movement, uniting for one hour to turn off their lights in a global action to fight climate change. You are invited to join your company, workmates, friends, neighbours and family for Earth Hour 2008 by visiting www.earthhour.org and registering. It costs nothing to register and you will be sent information about what to do on 29 March and how to have Earth Hour everyday.

via Lorraine Cairnes

Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. Membership Form

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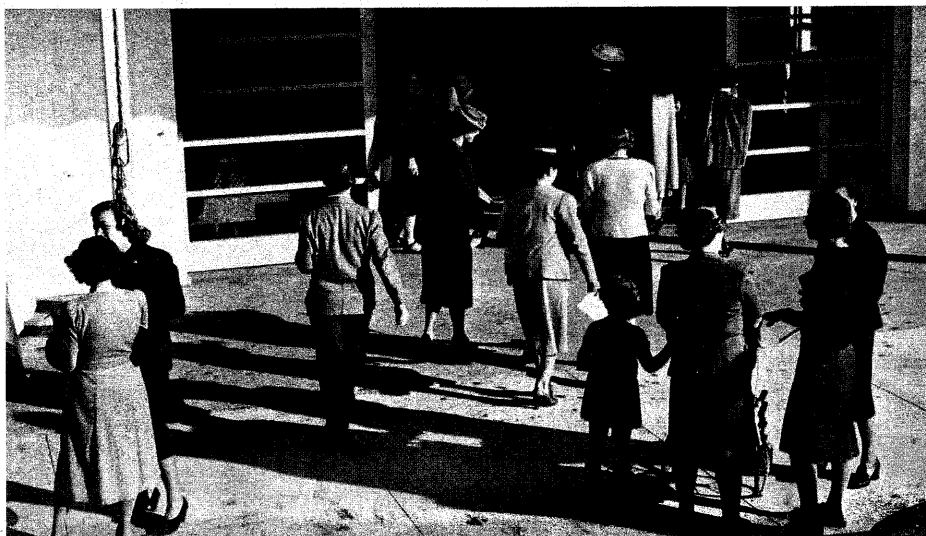
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CASTLECRAG COMMUNITY CENTRE 60th ANNIVERSARY



Opening day at the Community Centre

As advised in *The Crag* No 165 (p5), the October general meeting of the Progress Association celebrated 60 years of activities at the Castlecrag Community Centre. Residents and former residents recalled community efforts to build the centre and its use over the years.

Barry Duncan, son of Frank and Anice, recalled his father's key role in the establishment of the Centre as the driving force behind the cooperative society established to manage its construction and operation. The community raised funds for the Centre and put in long and arduous work for its construction. Barry expressed pleasure at visiting Castlecrag again and meeting many people he knew when he was a child, and hoped that the Centre would continue to be put to good use. Adrienne Kabos advised the meeting that a transcript is available on the Walter Burley Griffin Society website of an interview by Sue Randle of Frank Duncan and Edgar Deans, videoed 19 years ago, where they described establishing the Community Centre and community life in the Crag at that time.

Elizabeth Lander lauded the vision and efforts of earlier residents who in 1943 at a time of crisis during World War II proposed and built our Community Centre. It was a remarkable achievement by a small community and Elizabeth expressed special

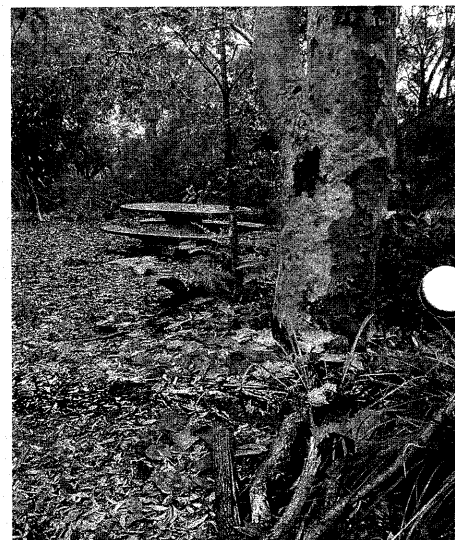
thanks to the Deans family, early friends and colleagues of the Griffins. Lindy Batterham spoke of her mother, Joyce, who played a key role with Frank Duncan in establishing the Centre and many other aspects of community life. The Helene France School of Ballet which Lindy and other aspiring balletomanes attended was one of the many activities held at the Centre. While the kindergarten operated during the day, it routinely cleared furniture away to facilitate use of the Centre for a wide range of activities.

Jonathon Mason spoke with emotion about the building blocks made by his father, Jim Mason, in 1947 for the kindergarten and still in daily use. One of his earliest memories was playing with the blocks at home when they were being made. Jim Mason also made and installed a gym—'Jimmy's Jungle'—that has now been removed. Jon noted that in the late 1940s residents walked everywhere: security was no problem because everybody, including the shopkeepers, knew everybody. There were many extra curricular activities such as music, painting, scouts, etc and there was a genuine community spirit.

Neil Buhrich spoke of his parents, Hugh and Eva, refugees from Germany who bought land in Castlecrag in 1941 but could not own it due to their status, so almost from birth Neil has owned land in the suburb. He

spent most of his childhood exploring the bush with other children, sailing on Middle Harbour being popular. Discussion groups were held fortnightly in various houses, needing preparation and thoughtful input. Eva was very strongly involved in the anti-expressway effort. John Gibson told the meeting that when he and Joan built their house in The Rampart in 1953 the young population and the Community Centre were among the key attractions. Their house was ideally sited with the kindergarten at one end of their street and the Infants' School at the other.

John Kabos brought things to the present day describing the work of the Community Centre 530A Management Committee, resurrected in the mid 1980s. The Centre was in a run-down condition; the fence at the rear of the playground was dangerous and needed reconstruction. A Plan of Management was prepared by an architect and approved by Willoughby City Council. All its objectives have now been achieved including disabled access, the storeroom, the extension to the library, the new deck and resumption of land which had been alienated at the eastern end of the playground. Several speakers, including Dorothy Fraser and Lindy Batterham, urged stronger community support for the library to ensure its survival.



*Harold Reid Reserve, Christmas 2007
Photo: Bob McKillop*



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Improving the NSW Planning System *continued from page 1*

for 'minor non-compliance', but a full DA to Council would be required where a DA does not comply with relevant codes. First-level appeal would be to a 'planning arbitrator' for a non-legal informal review. Only then could a further appeal go to the Court. A list of approved 'planning arbitrators' would be established by the Department and Councils.

The Progress Association supports clearer development controls that reduce non-complying DAs. However, the special circumstances of particular sites must be recognised and addressed. With its diverse topography, scenic and bushland areas and important Conservation Area, Castlecrag requires a more flexible approach to the treatment of DAs (both residential and commercial) to allow innovative solutions to development in our special geographic and social environment.

Private Certifiers: The role of private certifiers in the planning system remains controversial. The Paper proposes addressing perceived and actual conflicts of interest by strengthening the registration and auditing of private certifiers and broadened and mandatory training for certifiers. A key issue is whether private certification is an accountable and transparent system of accreditation, compared with the present system of elected Councillors making these decisions after consulting the community.

Please read the Discussion Paper at http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planning_reforms; the enclosed Special Report; and a Commentary by the Environmental Defender's Office (a not-for-profit legal centre specializing in public interest environmental law) at http://www.edo.org.au:80/pnsw/site/papers/planning_reforms1210.php

Please write as soon as possible to planningreforms@planning.nsw.gov.au irrespective of the 8 February closing date (with a copy-in-confidence to info@castlecrag.org.au), Premier Morris lemma, thepremier@parliament.nsw.gov.au and the NSW MP for Willoughby, Gladys Berejiklian, Willoughby@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Bruce Wilson

Community Centre Update

You may be aware our suburb of Castlecrag has a Community Centre down the driveway on the corner of The Postern and The Rampart.

This centre is utilised primarily by the Kindergarten Union (KU) kindergarten during the day from Mondays to Fridays during the school terms. It also houses a sub-branch of the Willoughby City Library which operates on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings – details of the operating hours are indicated on the notice board at the top of the driveway entrance to the centre. There is a small car park available for visitors to the centre.

At present the centre is used for a variety of local resident interest group meetings, including the Castlecrag Conservation Society and the Castlecrag Progress Association. It is also used as a voting booth for elections.

The centre is also available for use by local residents for private functions including children's birthday parties and larger family and community gatherings for weekend

day and evening functions. It serves sometimes as a back-up for The Haven shows if weather is inclement.

Hire of the hall currently costs \$50 for a child's party and \$100 for an evening function. A cleaning bond may be payable as well. For adults wishing to use the hall where alcohol may be served, additional insurance may be necessary at the hirer's expense. Some restrictions apply for the use of the hall—these include hours of availability, the use of alcohol on the premises, security and insurance.

A small kitchen is situated in the Community Centre. The centre has a wide range of facilities including air-conditioning, reheating of food in a reasonable sized kitchen, refrigeration, tables, chairs and an outside children's playground with climbing equipment.

If you are interested in booking the centre, further details can be obtained by contacting the booking officer, Warwick Hutchinson on 9958 4230.

Warwick Hutchinson

Northbridge Plaza update

To update residents on the proposed redevelopment of the Northbridge Plaza (see August issue of *The Crag*) we offer a brief summary of developments. Council at its meeting on 23 July 2007 proposed two subcommittees, each with strong community representation, to oversee the Plaza Masterplan process: a Technical Working Group and a Reference Committee.

Specialist consultants have been appointed and are currently working on technical investigations which include research on traffic flows and parking, economics, planning, consumer needs and community facilities. During February the two committees will review: a survey of visitors to Northbridge Junction and the Plaza, the outcome of community 'focus groups' about the needs and aspirations of visitors, a draft report on the character and role of Northbridge Junction and the Plaza in the economic environment of the lower North Shore, and analysis of community facilities

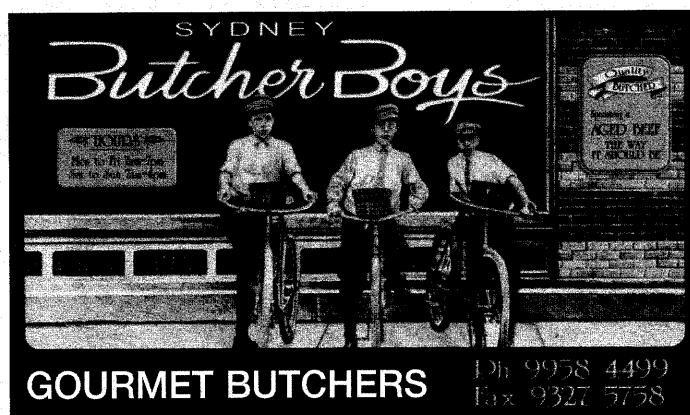
in Northbridge. These investigations should gather the information needed for the committees to formulate a robust Masterplan.

Arrangements are being made to facilitate community participation in planning. Information sheets, advertisements and feedback forms have been prepared for approval. These will be widely distributed, a community consultation website will be established, a toll free number provided for feedback and 'Have Your Say Days' will be advertised through the NPA newsletter, *The 202*, and *The Crag*.

The Castlecrag Progress Association is working closely with its Northbridge counterpart in making written submissions and addressing Council meetings, to assist in achieving a balanced development at the Plaza and to protect Castlecrag's own shopping facilities.

Editors

(with input from Northbridge PA)



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CISSIE GODFREY 1903–2007

The death of Cissie Godfrey at the age of 104 on 16 July 2007 marked the passing of one of the last characters of the early Castlecrag community.

Born Sarah (Cis) Leveson to Polish parents in Glasgow, Scotland, she married Tom Godfrey, an engineer and they immediately emigrated to Sydney. Living in the Griffin house at 136 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag from 1931 to 1939, they became actively involved in the local community.

Cissie and Tom hosted music evenings at their house every Monday. Cissie remembered that these evenings usually ended in discussion, and that Marion Griffin would often raise arguments about mathematics and music. Walter and Marion never failed to turn up on Monday nights.

In her later years Cissie often discussed Castlecrag and had a remarkable memory for conversations, events and life in Castlecrag, even recalling conversations of 70 years ago. The years did not dim her memory of Walter and Marion Griffin. Or of personalities such as Betty Roland, author and playwright and her partner, Guido Baracchi, a well known socialist; Guy Manton, Professor of Greek; writer Bernard Hesling, and his wife, Flo; lawyer and politician, Edward St. John; architect, Hugh Burhich; sculptors Bim Hilder and Anita Date; artists Lorna and Edmund Harvey; and bushwalkers Anice and Frank Duncan. The Godfreys shared the Griffins' love of the bush and were avid bush walkers.

When the Godfreys moved to Avalon during the war she maintained her links to Castlecrag and enjoyed her role as keeper of a part of Australian history. She visited *Beyond Architecture*, the Powerhouse Museum exhibition curated by Anne Watson in 1998, and made a cameo appearance in Bronwyn Mason's ABC/Film Australia documentary, *City of Dreams: the Collaboration of Marion Mahony and Walter Burley Griffin* (2000).

Courtesy WB Griffin Society newsletter



JOHN CREW 1927–2007

The journalist and television producer John Crew will be most remembered by Castlecrag residents as its serving Willoughby Council representative during the

heady days of the anti-expressway campaign in the 1970s.

After arriving in Castlecrag in 1956 John and his wife Laura immediately fell in love with the place and stayed until his retirement in 1986. The family was raised here, vegetables were grown in the back yard and everyone enjoyed the rock, the bush and Middle Harbour. They only moved from Castlecrag after they had found an equally magnificent spot on the south coast, in Bermagui, for their retirement. There they stayed fit and well until John had an unfortunate fall while getting onto his pushbike on 27 December 2007 that resulted in a slow bleed on the brain. This caused him to fall into a coma that night, from which he didn't recover, dying three days later.

In the 1970s John was incensed by the state government's renewed attempts to push forward with the opening of the proposed expressway corridor across the Castlecrag

peninsula. John joined the committee formed by the Progress Association in early 1974 to lobby against the challenge of the Warringah Expressway and soon assumed a prominent role in its affairs. With his journalist background he was cajoled into standing for local council on an environmental platform and he was elected to represent the Middle Harbour Ward in September 1974. His period on Council coincided with a period of community activism stimulated by the expressway threat. Following the election of the Wran Government in May 1976 and its decision to fulfil its election pledge to abandon the Warringah Expressway extension to Seaforth, John announced that he would not contest the 1977 Council elections. He remained active in the anti-expressway committee, however, and played a key role in the decision of the Wran Government to launch the Commission of Inquiry into Warringah Transport Corridor headed by Mr DS Kirby.

John Crew held strong environmental and social justice principles and here in Castlecrag he made a significant contribution to protect and preserve the natural suburb we all love. He was a much loved husband, father and community member. He is survived by his wife Laura and children Mark, Ross, Christopher and Lara, and six grandchildren. A precis of John Crew's life can be found in the obituaries of the *Sydney Morning Herald* dated 9 January 2008.

Mark Crew

News from St James

Operation Caring Christmas

The congregation at St James' Anglican Church tries to bring a little joy and love each year to those who are shut-in, disabled, elderly, sick or lonely through its 'Operation Caring Christmas' (*The Crag* 162, p.5). This was initiated 12 years ago by June and Barry Raymond and each Christmas volunteers from the congregation make visits to approximately 40 homes. The happiness that has come from this programme has been quite extraordinary.

It is a Christian outreach programme run by St James, but we visit people regardless of

any religious affiliation. Some of our most loved visits were to two Jewish ladies who had survived the holocaust. Sadly both have died. They really enjoyed our visits as much as we enjoyed meeting them!

We take along home-made goodies: a Christmas cake or shortbread, mince pies, chocolate etc; diabetics receive a posy of flowers. The food is mostly baked by St James' congregation members and other friends who support this cause. If invited in the visitor from St James chats to them for as long as they need. The people we visit really

continued on page 7



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News from St James

continued from page 6

look forward to seeing us each year. It is a chance to talk!

Because of privacy restrictions we are no longer able to obtain lists of people in need from Willoughby Council. Accordingly we wish to invite any residents of Castlecrag or Willoughby who have the names and addresses of people who would enjoy a visit from one of the 'Operation Caring Christmas team' to contact June or Barry at 9958 4739.

June Raymond

Children's holiday club

The very successful Children's Holiday Club held on 3-4 January at St John's Church, East Willoughby under the auspices of the Anglican Parish of East Willoughby (St James, Castlecrag and St Johns, Willoughby) was attended by 36 children each day (42 individual children). Pastoral Assistant Richard Sercombe was assisted by volunteers from both churches.

It is intended to arrange another meeting in the July holidays. Contact: Richard Sercombe (9958 4377, 0418 291 219) for further information.

New Rector

On 31 January the Rev Robert (Bob) Cameron was welcomed by the Rt Rev Dr Glenn Davies, Bishop of North Sydney and The Venerable Terry Dein, Archdeacon of North Sydney, as the new rector of St Johns and St James. The ceremony was held at St Johns.

The church has been fortunate that Bishop Peter Watson has been Acting Rector since late August and the congregation appreciates the work that he and his wife Margo have put into their stewardship.

Margo has fond memories of her childhood at Castlecrag with her parents, Edgar and Cappy Deans.

POET LORIKEET FOUND!



Poet Lorikeet judge Lorraine Cairnes gets proceedings underway at Castlecrag's first annual Poetry Day on 11 November. Photo: Peter Moffitt.

Some 50 residents joined in Castlecrag's first Annual Poetry Day on Remembrance Day, 11 November 2007, outside Sally's Bookshop. Many had penned works reflecting Castlecrag's community, environment, history or future. Poets ranged in age from 9 to 90 and all delighted in the informal fun of a lazy Sunday afternoon. Audience adulation was encouraged where any poem mentioned a possum, brushtail or ringtail. Judges' criteria were relevance to Castlecrag, technical qualities, flow and use of imagery.

Eventual winner of the children's section was bright-eyed Sophie Alais with 'Gnomies, The Storm' and 'I wonder', closely followed by Tom Hayward's 'The misty, misty Crag' and limerick 'Possum'. Best non-resident poem was from Eve McGlashen whose 'Lorikeets of Castlecrag' knew 'we need the promise of a rainbow in our lives', a sentiment emphasised by Gaye James' 'For Shannon', mourning her son's death at 23 in 2000.

The fur really flew in the hotly contested

possum section with Rob Sheldon's 'Crag Drummer' waking him with a 'crash upon the flat tin roof' as he departs to forage, while the family Hayward's eight verses described 'nine possums sitting like Christmas tree ornaments, under a Southern Cross'. Elizabeth Lander wrote about the nocturnal death of a possum and Toni Foster portrayed possum as the 'sentinel of the night' that keeps 'the evening secrets of Castlecrag...people who visit others'.

Narrative poems were very popular. Librettist Vicki

Freame rewrote the song 'I've Been Everywhere' to 'The Crag is where it's at, man', explaining to a New York visitor the curious sets of names of our streets, plants, animals and even shops. Terese Hayward mused on a detour around the Sailors Bay 'winding green track' and Marie Bassett's 'All The World's a Stage' wittily brought Shakespeare's seven ages of man to 2007. But the winner of the 'Poet Lorikeet' garland was Dorothy Fraser's 'Aussie Journey', 14 Homeric stanzas relating the family's emigration from Scotland in 1975 to be greeted by graffiti 'Shame Fraser Shame'!

Our thanks to all for a great afternoon and what will surely become an annual event. Thanks also to Sally's Bookshop, to Bai Yok for lending chairs, and to Castlecrag Cellars for prizes.

Note: The Poet Lorikeet's first official poem, 'The Haven's Carols', is displayed at The Griffin Centre noticeboard plus photos from Christmas Eve and the production *When Camels Could Fly*.

Bruce Wilson



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Summerhaze at The Haven

'Summerhaze at The Haven' scheduled for 1 December promised to bring six youth bands together sharing a love of roots, blues and funk. All had donated

their talents to registered charity 'The Beats That Give Back' to fund a rainforest project.

Unfortunately rain cancelled the full show at the last minute. Nevertheless, in *The Haven* tradition, some 80 young people risked the showers and rocked to the music of 'The Pachamamas' with local musos Scott Wilson and Tim Charody, together with the visiting Melbourne band 'The Landlords' (both worth google-ing). With the barbeque sizzling, the bluesy rhythms soon had the dancers on the stage. When the organisers announced that costs had not been covered, the revellers dipped again into their wallets in a generous manner.

Bruce Wilson

...and just a drop of Cab Suave...

PATRICIA O'CALLAHAN and THE GRAHAM JESSE QUARTET in cabaret

The Haven Committee was hoping for a balmy Sydney summer evening for our cabaret on 8 December. All the catered tables were booked, the seating on the Griffin tiers (normal stone seating) was almost full and Michael from the Bai Yok restaurant had created a special dinner for the evening. One of Sydney's best musicians and Haven Committee member Graham Jesse had brought together his superb jazz quartet to accompany the world class cabaret singer Patricia O'Callaghan who had agreed to perform for us, because she loves the venue. We were set for one of the best nights of outdoor entertainment ever!

Unfortunately, the rain had been with us all week and continued into the morning and there was grey fuzzy cloud above—the forecast was ominous, the setup arduous and by midday the difficult decision had to be made to play safe and retreat to the wet weather venue at Northbridge Men's Bowling Club.

Although the ambience was not quite the same, it was very pleasant and the performances were fantastic. Graham Jesse and his group opened with some superbly executed jazz classics and the scene was set for Patricia O'Callaghan. We were immediately enthralled by Patricia's skill and the power and joy of her performance with compositions from the likes of fellow Canadian Randy Newman, Kurt Weill and Edith Piaf with songs such as *Cry me a River*, *Try to Remember*, and Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*. A very full programme of rich sounds and eclectic music continued to captivate us for the rest of the evening. Great music, delicious food and a grand time was had by all.

The Haven looks forward to staging more cabarets in 2008 and Patricia has promised to go again with us at the Amphitheatre in 2009. And what of the evening weather on 8 December? The grey fuzzy cloud slowly wandered off and we were left with a mild Sydney Summer evening!

Christmas Carols 2007



Christmas Eve Carols at The Haven
Photo: John Vaughan

The Carols was a huge success, with our biggest crowd ever; there was not a spare rock or piece of earth to be found! Our thanks go to Marlene Vaughan and her musical ensemble—we were particularly privileged to have Julia de Plater join us this year as pianist. The committee was deeply touched by the generosity shown by our community towards the orphaned children in Cambodia. Our first 'Haven Giving Tree' was laden with a variety of new, superior quality clothing as well as colourful tools to draw and write with. Marion Mahony Griffin (the Haven's benefactor) would have been proud! The gifts are being personally

delivered, travelling as excess baggage with the mother of the young Australian woman, Tara Winkler, who is voluntarily running the Orphanage. We will let you know how they were received in the next 'Crag'. The Committee offers a big thank you to all who contributed.

Lindy Batterham



Happy New Year from the Cambodian Orphanage Photo: Lindy Batterham

The Wind in the Willows

As you can see from our poster on page 10 the major autumn production at The Haven will be a new adaptation of the ever-popular Kenneth Grahame classic. You can meet all the loveable riverbank animals and follow their irrepressible adventures outdoors in the idyllic bush setting of The Haven Amphitheatre in Castlecrag!

The Wind in the Willows is the second co-production between RAW-EM Theatre Co. and The Haven Amphitheatre Committee. Julie McKay, the producer behind RAW-EM, is confident that this production will build on RAW-EM's reputation for delivering a great night's entertainment which has had audiences either coming back a second time or spreading good 'word of mouth' to family and friends.

This live performance would be an ideal way for HSC English students to study *Wind in the Willows* as a supplementary text for *The Journey* area of study. A pamphlet will be available on how this production explores physical, imaginative and inner journeys.

Howard Rubie

ARCHIVIST needed!

The Haven Amphitheatre is looking for someone who could help create more order with its records. A little time is all that's needed.

Please ring Lindy Batterham 9958 2127 if you can offer your services in any way.
www.thehaven.biz

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NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE WEEK

5-20 April 2008

The National Trust is again overseeing Heritage Week events in NSW, this year the theme being 'Our Place' about Australia and its people.

For events supported by Willoughby City Council check the website www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au. The following events are listed:

Pub Tales: hear locals bring Willoughby's history to life with tales of Henry Lawson, sporting legends and TV personalities. Sunday 20 April, 1:30 - 5:30pm. This is a free event but bookings are essential for the bus tour; information on 9777 7976.

Gore Hill Cemetery tour: the tour will focus on the cemetery as a place in the community, in a historical and current context. Sunday 13 April, start 11am at Westbourne Street, Gore Hill.

Cost: \$25 per person or \$20 for members of the National Trust; bookings are essential: please call 9777 7976.

Museum Open Days: the museum is a Federation cottage called Boronia, at 58 Johnson Street, Chatswood with displays showing the lifestyle of early times in the district with photographic displays, household items, workplace memorabilia and a presentation of childhood activities and pastimes in the Willoughby district. Open on Sundays 6 & 20 April, 1:30pm-4pm, Thursdays 10, 17 & 24 April, 10am-4pm. Refreshments available in the pleasant back garden. Admission by donation; information on 9419 7354 or 9419 5851.

An Old Chatswood Ramble: see lifestyle and early town planning combined in the conservation zone. A short to medium length walk including many National Trust listed homes, followed by a visit to the Willoughby District Historical Society Museum. Tour starts at corner Johnson and Neridah streets, Chatswood on Sunday 6 April, 12:30pm. Cost: \$8 per person; bookings essential: please call 9419 7354 or 9419 5851. Refreshments will be available.

After Griffin: the work of Eric Nicholls 1935-1965: an informal illustrated talk by architects of Nicholls' office reminiscing about office practices and some of the projects ranging from residential to Caltex House, Sydney's first high rise building. Eric Nicholls began work for Walter Burley Griffin in 1921 at the age of 19. The talk will be held on Sunday 30 March at 2:30pm at Chowne Hall, Willoughby Park Centre, corner McClelland Street and Warrane Road, Willoughby. Cost: \$10 per person or \$5 for members of the Walter Burley Griffin Society; information on 9958 4516 or email info@griffinsociety.org

Heritage Exhibition: this community photographic exhibition will highlight the lifestyle of people from the Willoughby area from our indigenous culture through to the present day. It will be open from Wednesday 26 March-Friday 11 April, Mondays to Fridays 9am-5pm at Council Foyer Exhibition Space, 31 Victor Street, Chatswood; information on 9777 7900. This is a free event.

Willoughby Heritage Awards: the awards

recognise and promote environmentally sensitive design solutions that ensure that the heritage character of the Willoughby Local Government area is maintained and enhanced. Entries will be on display throughout the festival Mondays to Fridays 9am-5pm in the Council Foyer Exhibition Space, 31 Victor Street, Chatswood. Award recipients will be recognised in an awards presentation ceremony on Wednesday, 9 April at 6pm at the Council Chambers; information on 9777 7900.

Heritage House Walk: to be conducted by the Artarmon Progress Association through the Artarmon Conservation Zone on 5 April 1pm-4pm, visiting a number of early 20th century houses which have adopted innovative and exciting solutions for extensions and renovations. Registration and collection of walk map are at Artarmon Community Library, Elizabeth Street. Good walking shoes, a sunhat and bottled water are recommended. \$7 per person; bookings essential on 9419 3925.

In addition there is an on-line game, **Hunting the Treasures of Willoughby**, where children (aged 5-12) can explore Willoughby's history on line, by hunting for clues based on the Willoughby City Heritage Plaques to crack the secret code! A brochure detailing Willoughby's Heritage Plaques is available from the Willoughby City Library. Information: 9777 1000.

Heritage Week is an opportunity to learn about the history of our local area and appreciate some of our treasures.

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Community Notice Board

Community Organisations

Castlecrag Progress Association:

'Representing the Castlecrag Community'

General Meeting: Tuesday 26 February, 7.30pm for 8pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre. Dr Haydn Washington, Director, Sustainability Projects at Willoughby City Council, will speak on 'A Sustainable future for Willoughby'.

CragSitters:

Has been set up to give families the opportunity to network with each other and to provide contact with available babysitters in the area. New members, both families and babysitters, are most welcome. A function is being planned for March or April. Contact email: cragitters@yahoo.com.au

Sustainability Street (SusStreet):

Two groups operate in Castlecrag under the auspices of Willoughby City Council to save resources such as energy and water in order to live in a more environmentally-friendly way.

Bulwark & Neighbours Sustainability Street Group's program for 2008 is currently being developed; all residents of Castlecrag and nearby are welcome. Contact: Debra Player on 9958 8852 or Chris Williams at WCC 9777 1000.

Sugarloaf Sustainability Street Group meets on the third Sunday of the month from 3.30pm at Sugarloaf Crescent. Contact: Gay on 9958 8569, Katja on 9958 7616, Evelynne on 9958 2478 or Rob Gibson at WCC 9777 1000.

The Haven Amphitheatre:

'The Wind in the Willows' (see p 12).

Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc:

'After Griffin: The work of Eric Nicholls 1935-1965', 30 March 2.30pm; \$5 members / \$10 non-members. Enquiries: 9958 4516 (see page 9).

Castlecrag Community Library:

Support your local library. Tuesday 3pm-4.30pm; Thursday 2pm-5pm; Saturday 11am-12noon. Phone: 9958 8991.

Community Events

Artarmon Progress Association:

Heritage Festival House Walk through the Artarmon Conservation Zone on 5 April 1pm-4pm. Bookings essential (see page 9).

Clean Up Australia Day 2008:

Sunday 2 March 2008 (see Community Bytes p 2); contact Edward Coates (Sea Scout Group) at janinecoates@optusnet.com.au or Terese on phone 9958 4331 for further details, or check the webpage: <http://events.cleanup.org.au/?Retreat+Reserve>

Griffin Reserves Community Forum:

With guest speaker Professor James Weirick will be held on Thursday 6 March 2008 at the Community Centre (see Community Bytes p 2).

The Rotary Club of Northbridge Inc:

Invites local business persons to an evening to explore the possibility of re-establishing a Chamber of Commerce for Northbridge and Castlecrag, to be held at the Northbridge Golf Club from 5.30pm on Tuesday 19 February (cost \$20, including dinner). The previous Chamber of Commerce ceased in the mid 1990s after nearly 40 years. Enquiries/acceptances to Peter Hodgson on 9958 5340.

Sydney Opera Society:

This group meets at 2pm at the Presbyterian Church Hall, cnr Laurel and High Streets, Willoughby. There will be a lecture by Murray Dahm on *Arabella* on 1 March, followed by a recital on 5 April by Opera Diploma Students from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Information: Shirley Robertson on 9605 5851 or Nancy Fleming on 9958 3110.

Willoughby City Council:

See page 11 for information on the public forum on the future of the sustainability levy, e.restore, and Willoughby's environment at 6.30pm-8.30pm approx, Wednesday 20 February at the Dougherty Community Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood.

Willoughby City Council Ewaste collection:

To be held Saturday 23 February between 9am and 4pm at the Council Works Depot, corner Frederick Street and Reserve Road, Artarmon. See page 11 or phone the Help & Service Centre, 9777 1000 for further information.

Willoughby District Historical Society:

5 April, 2pm: Castlecrag historian and author Bob McKillop will make a presentation 'Tackling Historic Myths', which will draw on research for his recent books to explore how mythical historical events emerge and are perpetuated. To be held at The Craft Room, Dougherty Centre, Victor Street, Chatswood. Information: Mary Thom on 9419 5851.

Willoughby Environmental Protection Association (WEPA):

The guest speaker at the AGM (Tuesday 18 March) will be Dr Haydn Washington, Director of Willoughby City Council's Sustainable Projects. The meeting will be at the Artarmon Library, Elizabeth Street, Artarmon at 8pm. Information: Gay Spies on 9958 8569.



WILLOUGHBY
CITY COUNCIL

Council News

Bushcare Groups

Willoughby Council provides groups with a professional trainer for each session. A pleasant morning tea in the bushland is an integral part of monthly bushcare work sessions. All residents are welcome to come and participate.

The Oriel Reserve Bushcare Group, meets 9am–12 noon 3rd Sunday each month; next dates: 17 February, 16 March, 20 April. Contact Council 9777 7875.

The Keep Reserve Bushcare Group, meets 9am–12.30pm 2nd Sunday each month; next dates: 10 February, 9 March, 13 April. Contact Matthew Keighery 9967 2682.

The Casement Reserve Bushcare Group, meets 9am–12 noon 3rd Sunday each month; next dates: 17 February, 16 March, 20 April. Contact Sue Burk 9958 4295.

The Retreat Bushcare Group, meets 9am–12 noon on the 4th Saturday each month; next dates: 23 February, 22 March, 26 April. Contacts Jill Newton 9967 4933 or Lorraine Cairnes 9958 1213.

The Rockley Street Bushcare Group, meets 9am–12 noon on the 4th Saturday each month; next dates: 23 February, 22 March, 26 April. Contact Tanya Coates 8907 9204.

E-waste collection

Willoughby City Council Works Depot will accept domestic e-waste (electronic equipment) free of charge at the Works Depot (corner Frederick Street and Reserve Road, Artarmon) on Saturday 23 February between 9am and 4pm. E-waste includes computers, monitors, televisions, printers, scanners, video players and more. The offer is limited to three televisions and three computer units per household, either loose or in a cardboard box. Proof of residence will be required. Information on Council's Help & Service Centre, 9777 1000.

CouncilCab now operates on Saturdays

Willoughby's pre-booked 'taxi' service, CouncilCab extended its operating hours to include Saturdays from Saturday 8 December to help residents and visitors get around Willoughby at an affordable price without the hassles of traffic or parking. The extended service operates from 8.30am–4.30pm every Saturday, while operating hours Monday to Friday continue to be 10am to 3.30pm. For information on CouncilCab phone 9777 1000 or visit www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au

e.restore PUBLIC FORUM

Castlecrag residents will have received personal letters from the mayor outlining the proposals by Willoughby City Council to renew its sustainability levy, e.restore. This is an important issue that affects every Willoughby's environment that should be of interest to every resident.

Council is holding a special public forum on the future of the sustainability levy and Willoughby's environment that will provide you with the opportunity to have your say on sustainability and climate change, and to share your views on the achievements of e.restore initiatives and future projects. Details are as follows:

Date: Wednesday 20 February 2008,

Place: Dougherty Community Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood

Time: 6.30–8.30pm

Council also invites you to complete the e.restore questionnaire at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au or write to the General Manager, Willoughby City Council, PO Box 57, Chatswood NSW 2057 with your views regarding the sustainability levy.



WILLOUGHBY
CITY COUNCIL
City of Diversity

GRIFFIN RESERVES COMMUNITY FORUM

The Griffin Reserves Advisory Group invites Castlecrag residents to a community forum. The forum will address the significance of the Griffin Reserve System, look at restoration works that have been completed over the last 10 years, and discuss future management issues. The Griffin Reserves include Castlecrag's road islands and walkways. Your participation is most welcome.

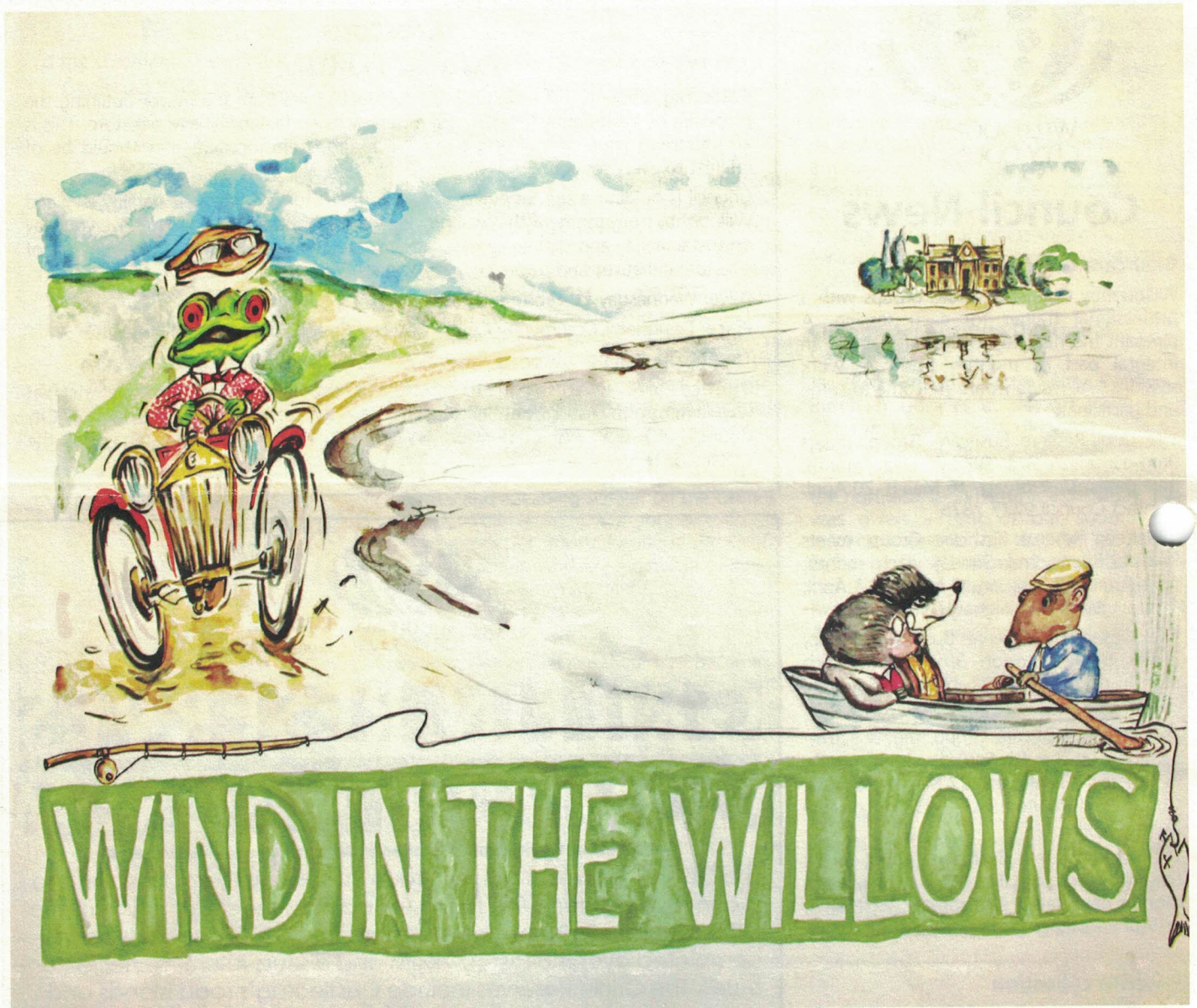
Guest Speaker: Professor James Weirick (Landscape Architecture Program UNSW).

THURSDAY 6 MARCH
CASTLECRAG COMMUNITY
CENTRE

(cnr The Rampart & The Postern)

7:00 - 9:00pm





The Haven Amphitheatre, Castlecrag

1 March - 3pm and 7pm

9 March - 3pm and 7pm

2 March - 3pm and 7pm

14 March - 7pm

7 March - 7pm

15 March - 3pm and 7pm

8 March - 3pm and 7pm

16 March - 3pm and 7pm

\$20 adults, \$12 for children, groups of 7 get 1 free

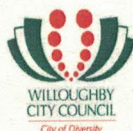
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*Insert in Feb 2008
"The Crag!"*

Proposed changes to the NSW Planning System – a potential threat to Castlecrag

Castlecrag has much to fear from the State Government's proposed changes to the NSW planning system. These proposed changes, which further erode public participation in the planning process, are put forward in a discussion paper which was released for public comment over the Christmas holiday period when many community organisations are in recess and many concerned individuals are on holidays. The Minister (Sartor) is reported to have the supporting legislation ready to introduce into the first 2008 session of Parliament.

The Department of Planning released for "public consultation" over the Christmas/New Year holiday period the discussion paper titled *Improving the NSW Planning System*, which outlines further proposed changes to the NSW planning system. It was unfortunate and perhaps cynical that these important proposals were publicised at the time of year when volunteer groups do not meet, and most people are on holidays. **We are very concerned that the Castlecrag community should be aware of the impacts of the proposed planning changes. Your Progress Association has made a submission, as there are many aspects of the proposed changes that we believe are not in the interests of Castlecrag and its community.**

A key objective of the proposed changes is to speed up the preparation of plans and the processing of development applications. As might be expected, many development-oriented organisations have enthusiastically supported the changes. On the other hand, local government and many community groups and the Environmental Defender's Office (EDO, a not-for-profit community legal centre specialising in public interest environmental law), have expressed fears that the reforms will significantly further erode the community's ability to participate in planning processes. Certainly the planning system needs improvement in efficiency, but the great danger inherent in some of the radical changes proposed is that the baby will be thrown out with the bathwater. The "baby" in this case is the ability of neighbours and the wider concerned community to know about development proposals and to have the ability and right to express their views about the likely impact.

The key proposed changes include:

Plan-making

The establishment of a 'gateway' system for making environmental planning instruments. This will involve an upfront assessment by LEP (Local Environmental Plan) Review Panels (or other body established by the Minister), of the suitability of an LEP against set criteria, including whether the plan is consistent with regional strategies. This assessment is made to determine whether or not the LEP proceeds. It is far from clear however whether, or to what extent, plan-making would include public consultation and to what extent a Council would be able to amend the standard template LEP, set by the Department of Planning, to address the special circumstances of a local area.

Development Assessment

Planning Arbitrators, appointed by the Minister instead of by elected Councils, will settle disputes concerning developments that are worth less than \$1,000,000 (although appeal to the Land and Environment Court from an Arbitrator's decision would be available). The majority of developments in Castlecrag would fall into this category, unless they have been classified as exempt or complying development (which could be quite likely).

Exempt and complying developments

It is intended that exempt and complying developments will be expanded within four years to cover 50% of all developments. Where a DA is assessed by a Council or by a private certifier (who is hired by the applicant) to be fully compliant with the applicable code, the Council or private certifier may approve the development and **there is no right of appeal**. Works found to be complying would be approved automatically, **without effective notification to neighbours**. The Discussion Paper in fact states that in such case it is *"unreasonable and unwarranted for there to be extensive public notification and community comment on such development"*. This would result in a significant numbers of houses in Castlecrag being built or modified without any formal advice to, or input by neighbours or others on potential issues such as privacy, overshadowing, view loss, and impact on the public domain.

Private Certifiers

As to the question of the role of private certifiers in determining whether a DA is compliant, the Discussion Paper acknowledges that the NSW decision to open the certification system to competition from the private sector in recent years has *"left the system open to allegations of a lack of integrity in decisions and uncertainty over responsibilities"*. It proposes some changes which purport to address perceived and actual conflicts of interest by limiting the number of certificates that can be issued by private certifiers to any one client in a calendar year, by broadening auditing and by introducing mandatory training for certifiers. This still leaves open the question of whether private certification is an accountable and transparent system of accreditation, compared with the present system of elected Councillors making these decisions after consulting the community.

In our opinion this would not be an appropriate nor accountable system, because any system which provides for a private certifier to be hired directly by an applicant can only lead to an entrenched conflict of interest under the proposed changes.

Further issues arising from the Discussion Paper

Public Consultation

It is unclear from the Discussion Paper how community participation will be possible for individual plans or DAs.

The Discussion Paper provides no detail about the proposed community consultation guidelines. The Castlecrag Progress Association strongly believes (as does the EDO) that public participation should remain as a fundamental right and a central part of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (EPA) Act which indeed has as one of its *objects*: "to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment". We fear the proposed reforms to the EPA Act will further erode public participation following the amendments made to the Act in late 2005 by the introduction of a new Part 3A under which a great deal of discretion is given to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (currently Frank Sartor) to make decisions on major projects. These amendments were widely criticised for a number of reasons, but primarily for limiting public participation in the planning process and limiting the environmental assessment required for major projects. This criticism has continued as the new Part 3A provisions have been used frequently by the Minister.

Heritage and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Discussion Paper provides little detail as to how development affecting heritage items and development in conservation areas (such as Castlecrag) would be assessed as complying development. It proposes that mandatory default codes could include standards for development in environmentally sensitive areas to be considered as complying developments, giving as examples pools and metal fences in bushfire prone areas and internal alterations to any existing house in any environmentally sensitive area.

The CPA's Position

The need for more consistent and simpler criteria for decision-making in planning and development proposals is not disputed. Indeed Castlecrag Progress Association was represented on a sub-committee of the Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations in 2006, which prepared a submission to Council with ideas about improving the development assessment and approval process, arguing *inter alia*, that development controls need to be clear and definitive, that residents need to know what they are permitted to do and equally importantly, they need to know what neighbouring developers are permitted to do. Following extensive discussion between the Federation executive and senior Council planners in 2006, the central premise that clear and consistent local criteria could and should be defined for exempt and complying development in Willoughby City in general, and Castlecrag in particular, remained elusive. As desirable as the idea sounds, it in fact requires a prescription that implies 'one size fits all'. With its diverse topography, scenic and bushland areas and important Conservation Areas, Castlecrag demands a more flexible approach to the treatment of DAs (both residential and commercial), which acknowledges the special circumstances of particular sites, and allows innovative solutions to development in the special and unique environment of Castlecrag. A fundamental flaw in the proposed changes is that it fails to acknowledge that developments in residential areas require complex assessments involving detailed knowledge of the local environment and its special features and qualities, and the community's expectations. It has come up instead with recommendations that rely on the dreaded simplistic generic planning approach.

The proposed reforms to the NSW planning system are an important issue affecting all of us. Please do take the time to read the Discussion Paper and make the State Government politicians aware of any concerns you may have as soon as possible. We anticipate that Willoughby Council will be making approaches to the State Government, so we suggest that a copy of your submission should also be sent to Council.

Although the final date for receipt of submissions was 8 February 2008, we suggest that you should nevertheless feel free to comment on the proposals through interest groups, through our local member, Gladys Berejiklian (email: willoughby@parliament.nsw.gov.au), or directly to the Premier, Morris Iemma (thepremier@parliament.nsw.gov.au). You can find the Discussion Paper at http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planning_reforms/index.asp. But note that the Minister has indicated that he anticipates draft legislation to be available several weeks later and the legislation to be passed by Parliament before the end of June 2008, leaving very little time for discussion!

There is a useful summary of the reforms and overview of the key issues in a document written by the Environmental Defenders' Office (EDO) (a not-for-profit community legal centre specializing in public interest environmental law) at: http://www.edo.org.au:80/edonsw/site/papers/planning_reforms071210.php. The purpose of this summary and overview is to "provide an outline of these reforms, to highlight the key issues and to assist community groups and members of the public in writing their own submissions". We have drawn from, and added to, the EDO's analysis to prepare this summary.