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### OUR NEXT MEETING:

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11.30am, Sunday, 18 May 2008  
at the Community Centre

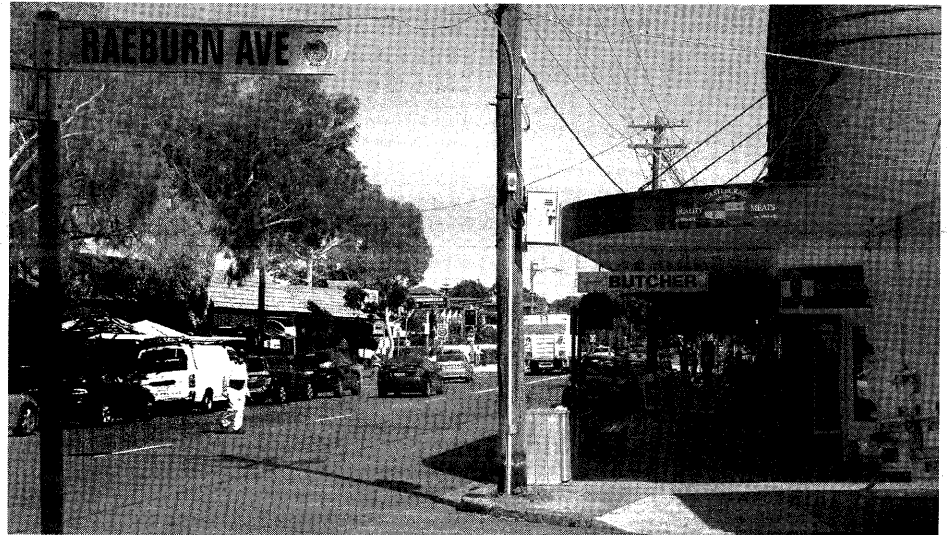
#### Guest Speaker:

**Professor Frank Talbot**  
Sydney Institute of Marine Science

Dr Talbot will make a presentation on the proposed work of the Institute on Sydney Harbour's urban marine environment and will be seeking feedback on your interests and concerns (See page 5).

Members, friends and residents of harbour-based suburbs are welcome and you are invited to bring a plate and drinks to enjoy a relaxing Sunday lunch in the delightful garden setting of the Community Centre.

## Northbridge and Castlecrag Chamber of Commerce



*Improving the streetscape in the Castlecrag shopping village is a priority for the backers of the Northbridge & Castlecrag Chamber of Commerce. Readers are encouraged to write to The Crag with their ideas for improvement. Photo: Bob McKillop.*

A number of Castlecrag business owners have joined with their colleagues in Northbridge in a move to establish a local Chamber of Commerce to represent their interests. A foundation group of businesses representatives came together at the inaugural meeting at the Northbridge Golf Club on 16 March and they are seeking wider support from local business houses before formally establishing a chamber.

The impetus for the move came from the Northbridge Rotary Club, which hosted an event to promote the concept in February at which Scott Haddinott, president of the Chatswood Chamber of Commerce, Lindsay Dominique, president of the Cammeray Chamber of Commerce, the Member for Willoughby, Gladys Berejiklian and the Mayor of Willoughby, Pat Reilly, provided briefings on the potential role of a local chamber. Rosemary Macey, proprietor of Castlecrag's Momo Interiors, was nominated as the interim president.

In addition to Momo Interiors, Ganache Patisserie and Roger Page Real Estate were represented at the inaugural meeting. Both the Castlecrag and Northbridge Progress Associations were also represented and indicated their support for the move.

Scott Haddinott advised the meeting that a local chamber would need clear objectives and demonstrate that it would be an effective voice for the local business community. It should also serve as a

networking function to assist its members with specific business problems towards agencies or individuals who could provide the assistance they need. While the Chatswood Chamber of Commerce faces difficulties in meeting the diverse interests of its members, a smaller and more focused chamber would have the advantage of being closer to its members and the local community.

The inaugural meeting identified the goal or purpose of the Chamber of Commerce being the need for a 'voice' to represent the business community of the Northbridge and Castlecrag village shopping centres. A range of potential strategies was put forward, including improving the environment and attractiveness of the Northbridge and Castlecrag shopping centres; publicity in local newspapers and other media in order to draw more customers to the local businesses; and awards for successful businesses. Building links with the local communities, such as support for local fairs and events, was also seen as important. Follow-up meetings will work through the steps for incorporation of the chamber.

Rosemary Macey told *The Crag* that she sees enhancing the streetscape as a priority for the Castlecrag shopping village and promoting the unique heritage and environment to a wider range of visitors as a means of making the suburb better known.

**Bob McKillop**

## THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the  
Castlecrag Progress Association

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

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## Community Bytes

## Jodie McGregor Flowers

We offer a warm (if belated) welcome to our new florist Jodie McGregor. Jodie McGregor Flowers, which has been operating in Annandale for some time, and expanded 'across the Bridge' in 2007 to open a second shop here in The Quadrangle shopping centre at Castlecrag. Jodie and her team comprising Narelle (a Castlecrag local) and Stephanie (a new recruit from Roseville) are thrilled with the feedback and welcome they are receiving. When not at the Castlecrag store Jodie can be found at the Annandale shop or spending time with her three children (all under 5!).

Jodie McGregor Flowers was the official florist for the 2000 Olympic Arts Festival and won the Sydney Flower Market award for Florist of the Year in 2003 and 2005. The business also won the florist category in the Champion of Champions at the 2005 Small Business Awards. Jodie handles the florist side of the business while her husband and business partner Stu White looks after the administration and purchasing side of the business, visiting the Flemington flower markets at 5am four times a week to personally shop for their stock. You can check out more about the business at: [www.jodie.com.au](http://www.jodie.com.au)

## Burley's Restaurant

Malcolm and Janet McLune have expanded the scope of Burley's Restaurant in The Quadrangle (*The Crag* 163, p.2). The business is now fully licensed with a good selection of wines, beer and spirits and operates from 8am to 9.30pm 7-days a

week. Day-time chef Dean Forbes has introduced a new menu with lunch-time specials. From 5.30pm the business operates as the family-friendly 'Pizzas in The Quadrangle' with an Italian chef preparing a range of quality pizzas and other items.

## Gourmet Source

Gourmet Source, the local delicatessen and cafe of Castlecrag, has recently changed hands after 9 years. The new owners Chris and Melinda Sims are looking forward to joining the Castlecrag community and building the business further.

Chris and Melinda currently reside in St Ives and have both grown up on the North Shore. They have three young children and are looking forward to the challenges ahead improving and growing the Gourmet Source business. Both have very strong business backgrounds and will be combining their skills in the retail environment. Look out for new stock lines and changes in the decor over the next year!

A number of long serving Gourmet Source staff have remained with the business, whilst a few new faces have also joined the team since the change in ownership. All of the staff look forward to continuing to provide high quality food and ingredients and friendly customer service to the residents of Castlecrag.

"Since taking over in November, the Castlecrag community has made us feel very welcome and we look forward to meeting more of you over the coming months," said Melinda Sims.

## MOMO Art Gallery and Oven Fairy

As reported in *The Crag* 161 (October 2006), Rosemary Macey operates a small art gallery



jodie mcgregor flowers  
fabulous flowers for fabulous people

We're just thrilled with the welcome we've received in Castlecrag (or the Paris of the North Shore as we like to call it). Thanks very much to everyone who has made us feel so welcome.

Jodie, Narelle and Steph

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### Community Bytes cont...

at her business premises at 79 Edinburgh Road. The gallery showcases an individual artist in a sole exhibition each month and this month's artist is Cecilia Coote. Rosemary or Peter are keen to hear from any local artist who is interested in exhibiting at the gallery. All different styles and media are covered, including various forms of two-dimensional art works, sculpture and ceramics. Please call in and view the various artists' work.

Rosemary reports that the Oven Fairy business, which provides exclusive residential oven and barbecue cleaning services, has been an outstanding success. Oven Fairy is now expanding with franchises in the Sydney metropolitan area under an arrangement where the home office provides ongoing support in every aspect of the business. Rosemary is seeking new franchisees to expand the business and she exhibited at the Franchising Expo at Darling Harbour from 28-30 March. Both Oven Fairy and the MO Art Gallery were finalists in the 2007 MLC Local Business Awards and our congratulations are extended to Rosemary and her staff for these achievements.

#### New Playgroup

The Warners Park Centre, at the end of The Outpost, is a local Playgroup location for residents of both Castlecrag and Northbridge. A member of Playgroup NSW, it is managed by a group of volunteer parents and offers weekly play-sessions for children aged 0-5 and their parents. Children can play with new toys, try a craft activity, play music, learn songs, dress-up, play with sand, generally have fun with other children in a safe environment under parental supervision. Special Easter and Christmas parties are also held each year.

Sessions are offered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am until 12pm. Fees are modest, at \$25 per family per term with a yearly membership fee of \$32. Vacancies are limited; phone the co-ordinator Donna Morris on 0410 689 288 or 09967-9918 for information and come along for a visit.

#### Sally's Bookshop

An anticipated sale of Sally's Bookshop did not proceed at the last minute, so Sally is examining several options and we expect to bring a further update in the next issue.

## President's musings

'Advance Castlecrag, Where' and 'Towards 2020' were two themes in this column last Spring. Your Progress Association always tries to forge past 'kerb and gutter' issues, and ask readers what sort of community and suburb you would like to grow here together.

Now Prime Minister Rudd has also adopted the 'Australia 2020' concept to initiate long term strategizing at a national level. All the best wishes to participants; may their combined knowledge, experience and visions for the future help resolve key national issues and positive future directions to enrich debate and action on national and global issues.

However this type of 'top-down' planning is not enough. Each small community needs to do its own 'bottom-up' planning. Where do you want this little peninsula of 1100 households to be in 2020? The next 12 years do not affect the age group of our current Committee as much as they do those in their 20s, 30s and 40s, possibly new to Castlecrag, attracted by the local 'vibe' as well as the geographical beauty, all of which has been developed and protected by older and past generations. You are often working long hours, raising young families, paying off homes. Nevertheless the 'investment' of a few hours per month in an organisation like the CPA is actually an investment in your household (and house value).

#### ACTION NEEDED:

1. Join the Castlecrag Progress Association now. It's the best \$10 investment you can make to play an active part in your suburb and community.
2. Nominate your peer leaders (or yourself) for the Executive Committee.

Nominations for the committee will be called at the next meeting. The Progress Association needs a mix of energy, enthusiasm, and experience across all age-groups and backgrounds.

3. Mark your diaries for Sunday 18 May, at 11.30am, for the Annual General Meeting (it's quite short) and a picnic lunch, at The Community Centre, The Postern. Bring a plate and a friend (see page 5).

I also dwell on energy management, which is likely to be a key issue over the next decade. Under current best estimates of oil resources, it appears that each oil-producing nation will increasingly use its own oil 'at home' to build and diversify that nation's economy. So, net oil importers (like Australia) will increasingly compete for the remaining dwindling export oil. In the last 6 years, oil prices have gone from \$20 to over \$100 per barrel.

Unless this issue is tackled nationally, Canberra's '2020 Vision' may become a hallucination. So what about some 'bottom-up' leadership from we locals? Let's reduce our overall energy usage, especially oil and coal sources. Why not use the car less, and buy the most fuel-efficient car next time? Let's make use of Sydney's 325 days of sunshine; use the clothesline, not the tumble-dryer (the worst CO2 offender in the house). New improvements in solar hot water and photovoltaic cells mean that these are increasingly affordable with residents banding together. (See the 'Carbon Reduction Action Group' article and 'Letters').

Bruce Wilson

## New Middle Harbour Walking Tracks

Thanks to Richard Newton, a Department of Planning announcement in November 2007 has been brought to our attention. This advised that a \$115,000 grant had been made to Willoughby City Council under the Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program (SSHAP) to assist the development of two new walking tracks along the Middle Harbour foreshore. The grant will assist to establish more than 1.5 kilometres of new walking tracks in Castlecrag and Castle

Cove. The first track will provide access from Sailors Bay Park to the Haven Amphitheatre while the second track will go from H D Robb Reserve linking Willowie Road to the 'painter's rock' lookout at Castle Cove. These walking tracks will bridge missing links in the walking track network along the Middle Harbour foreshore. SSHAP grants are awarded to councils and other organisations on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

### Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. Membership Form

#### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2008

I wish to renew / apply for membership fo the CPA Inc., and enclose payment of: \$ .....

(\$10 per person, \$5 per student)

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

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Castlecrag 2068

## Northbridge Plaza Masterplan status 26 March 2008

The Northbridge Plaza Masterplan process has made significant progress in recent months. Most of the work has taken place within the Technical Working Group (TWG). There are two community representatives on the TWG—Mark Monk as a neighbour of the Plaza, and Russell Hand, a planning consultant retained by Northbridge Progress Association (NPA). They report that the TWG is working cooperatively and that all decisions to date have been by consensus. The committee has briefed a number of consultants, selected and appointed them and reviewed their work to date. AMP is funding all the work. Because TWG is only now finalizing the technical reports, the Reference Committee (RC) has not had much information to review but that's expected to change in coming weeks.

A number of reports will be emerging from TWG in the next few weeks—among them a traffic report, the outcome of the community consultation surveys, an economic study and the results of a consumer survey.

The traffic survey shows that traffic volumes in streets adjacent to the Plaza (Harden Avenue and Tenilba Road) are already at capacity. Eastern Valley Way and Sailors Bay Road have traffic volumes typical of major arterial roads. The Plaza car park can readily

handle current demand, although capacity gets tight for two hours on Saturday mornings. The Plaza is a very convenient place to park and shop—the survey showed that about 80 per cent of cars stayed less than one hour in the car park.

The response to the community consultation program was good. 315 survey forms were returned of which 70 per cent were completed by Northbridge residents. The community's main concerns were: the retention of a village atmosphere in Northbridge, the loss of independent retailers in the Plaza, car parking and traffic issues, and the bulk and scale of any future development. A significant number of people said that ownership and development on the Council's car park was a big issue. A number said that the Plaza should not be changed at all.

The data-gathering and reporting to date comprises Stage 1 of the project and there have been few arguments or differences of opinion. Stage 2, which will start in May or June, is the generation of scenarios for the site. It's at this stage that differences of view may emerge.

The view of the Northbridge PA is that the Plaza should remain a neighbourhood shopping centre with little or no retail expansion. If the Plaza were to be expanded

substantially, NPA believes it would have a significant adverse impact on traffic flows in Northbridge and other parts of Willoughby; a negative effect on shopping strips in Northbridge and nearby suburbs, such as Castlecrag; and would reduce generally the amenity of Northbridge as a residential suburb. AMP made it clear at the February 20 RC meeting that it will be seeking a retail expansion greater than the "approximately 10 per cent expansion limit specified by Council's resolution in mid-2007. An AMP representative said: "If AMP thought it would only be allowed a 10% increase in retail space, it wouldn't be bothering with all this work."

At NPA's suggestion, it has been agreed that public meetings will be held after Stages 1 and 2 of the project, at which consultants will summarise their work and Council AMP people will be available to answer questions from Willoughby residents. The first is likely to be held in June. In the meantime, a comprehensive update of progress will be provided by speakers at NPA's regular general meeting at 8pm on 14 May in St Marks Hall, Malacoota Road, Northbridge.

**Malcolm Lye,**  
Northbridge PA

## Raeburn Avenue 'No Parking' Trial

In response to concerns from Raeburn Avenue over traffic problems in their street, Willoughby Council's Traffic Engineer has commenced a six month trial of 'No Parking' zones near the top of the avenue to reduce traffic blockages and the danger to pedestrians. Council surveyed all Raeburn Avenue residents; more than half responded, of whom some 82 per cent had experienced traffic problems associated with parked cars; and of these 71 per cent supported the introduction of short 'No Parking' zones. The engineer decided on a 'No Parking' zone on the east side next to the doctor's surgery, so that two lanes of traffic could pass. This seems to have achieved its aim of clearing the access/egress blockage.

More contentious are the 'No Parking' zones being trialed from No.1 down. Nearby shop-owners say that trade has noticeably reduced without real benefits to traffic flow. Some residents had proposed limited duration parking to reduce all-day parking and assist surgery patients and short-term shoppers.

Council also agreed to mark all driveways to show the parking spaces available. This appears to have been successful in enabling householders to keep their driveways unobstructed. Council's Compliance Unit has allowed a period of grace but is now enforcing the new restrictions.

Like all trials, some parts will work better than others. Residents may wish to give the trial its full six months, and then submit

their views to the Council's Traffic Section in July, for example, as to whether short-term parking would be preferable north of the shops' laneway. Whatever the result of further fine-tuning in July, Council and its engineers are to be congratulated on the extent of consultation, and the speed with which the trial's format was implemented.

Meanwhile please do not use the junction as a turning circle, a major cause of blockages in busy times, and a danger to pedestrians and motorists. Use the roundabout at Rutland Avenue, or turn down Raeburn Avenue and do a three-point turn further down.

**Bruce Wilson,**  
Raeburn Avenue



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# NSW Planning Updates

## Proposed Changes to the NSW Planning System

Following our article in the February 2008 issue of *The Crag* on the discussion paper titled 'Improving the NSW Planning System', an independent review of the submissions from the public exhibition of the discussion paper was prepared and released on 19 March 2008. It can be viewed under the following link from the NSW Department of Planning's website:

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planning\\_reforms/p/improving\\_the\\_nsw\\_planning\\_system\\_submissions\\_report.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planning_reforms/p/improving_the_nsw_planning_system_submissions_report.pdf)

While the formal submissions were in general support of the need for reform to the planning system, general concern was raised about: the timing of the discussion paper release, the time frame for lodging submissions, loss of community involvement in the planning process, a one size fits all approach to exempt and complying development and dilution of local government decision-making.

In summary, of the 31 key issues raised in the submissions and relating specifically to the discussion paper, there was general support for 12 of the key recommendations, mixed views on ten key recommendations and general opposition to nine of the key recommendations.

You may wish to keep up the pressure on State Government MPs about your concerns with some of these 'reforms' while awaiting the draft bill.

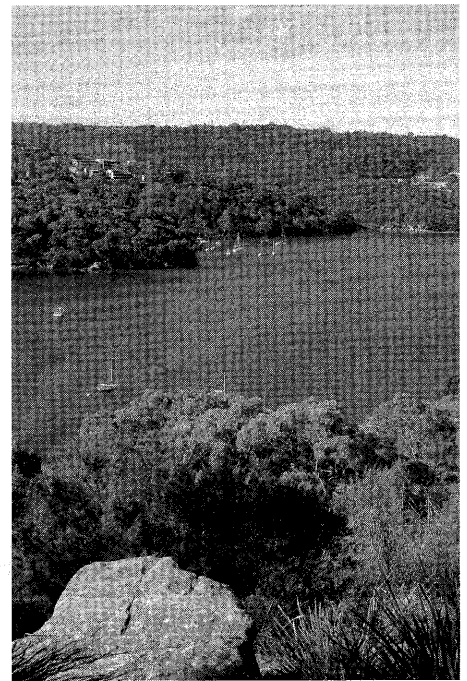
## Review of the NSW Heritage Act 1997

Also released by Planning Minister Frank Sartor on the same day as the above report was a report by an Independent Expert Review Panel titled 'A Review of the NSW Heritage Act 1997'. The panel was comprised of: Ms Gabrielle Kibble AO (Chair), Former Director-General of Department of Planning and current Liverpool City Council Administrator; Mr Michael Collins, Chair of the Heritage Council of NSW; and Mr John Whitehouse, Planning & Environmental Lawyer.

The 105-page report contains 65 recommendations, including greater fairness and rigour in the heritage listing process and retaining key elements of the current system including local and State listings and a Heritage Council. The Report will now be considered by the NSW Government and may be viewed under the following link:

[http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/mediareleases/heritagact\\_review\\_report.pdf](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/mediareleases/heritagact_review_report.pdf)

Jill Newton



## Magic Places!

Castlecrag has many 'magic places' to explore. The small public reserve off Edinburgh Road immediately to the west of Nos 197-199 is a wonderful place to bring visitors. Bob McKillop photographed this view of Sugarloaf Bay, with Harold Reid Reserve on the left and Castle Cove beyond, from the reserve on 16 March 2008. Please send in an image of your 'Magic Place' for inclusion in a future issue of *The Crag*.

# CCC ?

## 2009

more clues in the next *Crag*

## Professor Frank Talbot at Castlecrag, 18 May, 2008

Professor Frank Talbot, the chairman of the newly established Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS) at Chowder Bay, will be the guest speaker at the annual general meeting of the Progress Association on Friday 18 May. Professor Talbot has been a director of the Australian Museum, the Californian Academy of Sciences and the Natural History Museum, Smithsonian Institution. He was appointed foundation professor of Environmental Studies at Macquarie University in 1975, where he is now Adjunct Professor.

Frank, who was born and educated in South Africa, entered the Heads with his family on a beautiful September morning

44 years ago planning to work in the Australian Museum for 12 months, but fell in love with the Harbour, Sydney and outback Australia and stayed. Now officially retired, he has worked tirelessly to create SIMS, a not for profit research facility, a partnership between Macquarie University, University of New South Wales, the University of Sydney and the University of Technology. SIMS brings together key researchers to form cross-disciplinary teams of leading scientists working on issues that are critical for the sustainable management of our coastal and oceanic environments, with the Sydney Harbour urban marine environment being a major research focus of the Institute.

Professor Talbot will speak about SIMS and show a 9-minute DVD about its research interests. He is particularly keen for all residents of harbour foreshore suburbs, such as Castlecrag, to come to the meeting and exchange information about our marine environment.

All residents are welcome to attend this gathering, hear our most stimulating speaker and join together for a picnic lunch and get together in the delightful grounds of the Castlecrag Community Centre after the formal proceedings. The meeting commences at 11.30 am on Sunday 18 May and 'business matters' will be kept to a minimum.

SYDNEY

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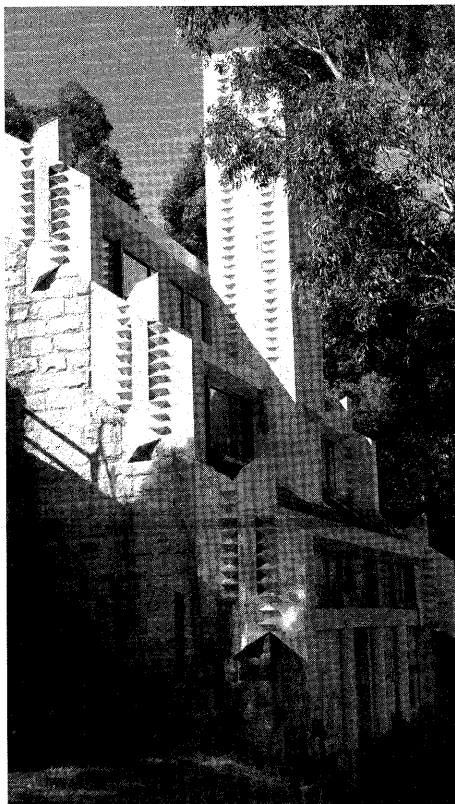
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## Willoughby Incinerator update



General view of the Willoughby Incinerator on 16 March 2008 following the first phase of the restoration works. Photo: Bob McKillop

Much has happened at the Griffin-designed Willoughby Incinerator in Small Street since we reported the decision of Willoughby City Council in August 2006 to undertake a full restoration of the heritage listed building. As of March 2008, the initial demolition and removal of previous additions had been completed, together with the preliminary testing of all structures.

Testing found that the chloride level in most of the concrete is at a level high enough to cause corrosion of the reinforcement. Cracking is present in the entire height of the chimney, which is in a very poor state, while much of the floor is also in poor condition.

The consultants have assessed several options for the future use of the building, including its potential role as a regional gallery. Unfortunately the incinerator site is not well located to capitalise on visitation,

public transport and car parking. The building itself is quite small; there is no access for loading bays and no space for storage. In addition, the heritage listing of the building carries a number of restrictions that may prevent the necessary alterations to make it effective as a regional gallery. The strict climate control systems necessary for such use would also add considerably to the cost.

Accordingly the consultants have recommended that the Willoughby Incinerator be developed as a cafe, exhibition/meeting rooms and artist studios. Council has endorsed the report's advice on the use of the building.

Work will now commence on the repair and restoration of the structure prior to the final fit-out for use. In addition, the proposed use of the building as a public venue will require installation of a lift near the north western corner (estimated cost \$250,000). A public art component will be incorporated in the lift over-run pit and it is proposed that an artist of note be commissioned to prepare this component.

The technical problems now identified and additional works have resulted in an increase in the cost of repair and restoration works. The total cost of the restoration project (including the lift) is now estimated at \$1.87 million. The additional funds (\$670,000) will be funded from Council's Asset Improvement Reserve.

The restoration work has taken considerably longer than expected but the end result will be a great example of reuse of a heritage building. The additional restoration cost, including the provision of a lift for people with disabilities, is vital to ensure that the building meets the needs of all of our community.

Given the incinerator's standing as Willoughby City's iconic building, we congratulate Council on implementing this project to ensure its future value.

The Incinerator, when completed, will be a remarkable building which will provide a valuable addition to Council's community facilities.

Editor

(based on report to Council, 3 March, 2008)

## CragSitters

*CragSitters* has surveyed its members to obtain feedback for planning events in the future and on any other support/services that it can facilitate. The responses identified interest in meeting in a park on Sunday afternoons, Mother's dinner out, Dad's dinner out, Mum's coffee catch-up with children of similar age and a BBQ at Willoughby Park. We plan to incorporate these activities in our program this year. If we haven't heard from you we would still be interested to hear any comments.

The next gathering for the *CragSitters* will be on Sunday 11 May 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 [cragitters@yahoo.com.au](mailto:cragitters@yahoo.com.au).

Sharie Kennedy-Wren

## The puppets!

Castlecrag residents will be aware of the large puppets of Walter and Marion Griffin that made regular appearances during the SOS\*Crag campaign to save our infant's school and at many other events since then. Their last 'outing' was at the 2007 Community Fair in June. Willoughby City Council has kindly stored the puppets at its works depot, but given the imminent relocation to a smaller site, community representatives have been asked to find a new home for Walter and Marion.

It is hoped that the puppets will venture Canberra for the 'Life in the Australian City' exhibition in the new gallery at the National Museum of Australia in 2009 (*The Crag* 165). In the interim, the Progress Association has made arrangements to relocate the puppets to a new storage site and has agreed to fund the manufacture of new storage bags. We hope to bring you a further update in the August issue of *The Crag*.

Editor



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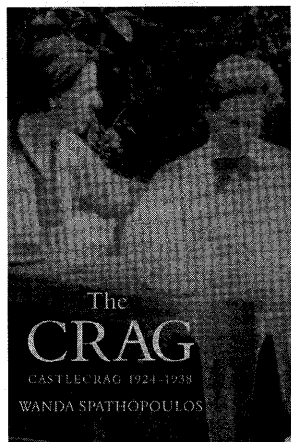
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## Book Review: The Crag – Castlecrag 1924-1938



Wanda Spathopoulos, *Blackheath, Brandl & Sclesinger, 2007. Paperback, 407 pages, 42 b&w photos. RRP 39.95.*

Edgar Herbert, who had spent six years in the United States where he studied physical education, found himself in the same compartment as Walter Burley Griffin on an overnight train journey from Sydney to Melbourne in 1920. Their conversation deeply impressed the educationalist and, following their move from Melbourne to Sydney in late 1922, Edgar and Grace Herbert brought their young family to live at Castlecrag in 1924, initially living in the Griffin-designed King O'Malley house (now the Private Hospital site). In early 1927 the family moved to a weekend shack on Torquay Point where there was 'no water, no electricity, no sewage, no ice, no bread or milk, and no mail'. There they remained until 1938, but the house that Walter Burley Griffin designed for them would never be completed.

Wanda Spathopoulos' book, which comprises memoirs of her childhood in Castlecrag supplemented by subsequent research into the period, provides a valuable record of the Castlecrag community in its founding years. Every member of each household during this 14 year period is covered it seems. Walter and Marion Griffin

play dominant roles of course, but the real heroes to emerge from the tale are Edgar and Grace Herbert. Like the Griffins, they were driven by a deep commitment to humanity and a desire to help others. As with the Griffins, economic times did not smile on Edgar Herbert, and he and his family lived in poverty for much of their time in Castlecrag; but his spirit and strong moral values never wavered. Wanda has done us all a service in documenting much of the Herbert family's life in this book, from Edgar's chance meeting with Griffin in 1920 through to the frustrations of his latter years when the Sydney YMCA thwarted his plans for advancement in order to keep the local physical education college going.

Perhaps the most important and fascinating feature of this book is the insight it provides into the magical environment and culture in which the children of the early Castlecrag grew up. I suspect it was not Wanda's main intention, but she has conveyed much of the feeling of freedom, exploration and interaction with nature that the Castlecrag peninsula offered its children—it was an idyllic childhood that people who grew up in Castlecrag into the 1950s and early 1960s continue to look back on with nostalgia, but sadly appears to have been lost in the world of mass consumerism, electronic entertainment and organised events that now dominate family life.

For the Herbert girls in particular, Marion Mahony Griffin became a powerful influence on their childhood. In her grand work, *Magic of America*, Marion states: 'All my life the time I have spent with children, always borrowed since I had none of my own, has been spent in making them "naughty". To me it was an obvious perversion of nature to try to instil moral notions into little children and a very apparent imposition on the part of grown-ups to make life easier for themselves at no

matter what cost of loss of character to the young.' Then of Castlecrag, she states: 'In this bush a child could roam at will. Children should no more be brought up in houses than colts and calves.' (Part III, p. 124)

The Herbert girls, Irven and Wanda, spent long hours with Marion and followed her rules on the freedoms they were allowed, particularly never disturbing the work of the architectural staff. Wanda, the younger, initially found Marion distant and overbearing, but these memoirs are a testament to the influence Marion had over her. To Wanda, 'Marion was dynamic; Marion was magic'. [From speech at book launch.] As soon as she was able, Wanda went overseas in search of the Greek gods that Marion had introduced her to, married her Greek man and lived there for much of her adult life.

Of Walter Burley Griffin we learn rather less. Most of the characters in this story have a deep admiration for Walter's architecture and the philosophy that lay behind it, but the man himself remains a distant and shadowy figure.

This book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the history and character of the Castlecrag of the 1920s and 1930s and is recommended reading for all local residents. It should, however, be seen as a memoir, albeit supported by a considerable amount of follow-up research, and many of the facts and interpretations will be open to contrary views. The book would have benefited by a more rigorous edit, for there is much that is peripheral to the central story in its 407 pages. And while several of the intertwinning chapters on the author's life in Greece provide a useful platform from which to appreciate the Griffins' design concepts for Castlecrag, this reviewer failed to see the purpose of the majority and found them distracting.

**Bob McKillop**



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## Griffin Reserves Community Forum

A large and appreciative audience of local residents enjoyed the Community Forum on the Griffin Reserves at the Community Centre on Thursday 6 March. Deputy Mayor Adrian Cox, the master of ceremonies for the evening, kept things moving along while demonstrating a detailed knowledge of the Griffin Reserve system and its significance.

Professor James Weirick of the University of NSW Landscape Architecture Program set the context for discussion with a stimulating address on the critical role of the reserve system in the Griffins' internationally recognised landscape design for Castlecrag. He traced the factors that had influenced Walter and Marion Griffin, including their formative years in unique landscapes around Chicago, the 'garden suburb' movement of the early 20th century, the natural environment of the Castlecrag peninsula and the philosophical values that underpinned their work. The conundrum was that while the Griffins were keen students of the natural Sydney sandstone landscape, scientific understanding of its ecology was poorly developed at this time. It soon became evident that the impact of residential development was having a negative impact on the flora and fauna they hoped to conserve in the reserves. While some of the walking tracks continued to receive regular use, others and the reserves they served were neglected and became overgrown.

James Weirick highlighted the efforts of members of the Castlecrag community to restore and manage the Griffin reserves over the years. Their amazing efforts brought the Haven Amphitheatre back to its former glory in 1976, while others actively explored the walking tracks and alerted the wider community to the state of the reserves in the early 1990s. In response to the requirements of the Local Government Act 1995, Willoughby City Council appointed Meredith Walker and Michael Lehany in 1996 to prepare a draft plan of management for the Griffin reserves and walkways in Castlecrag. This was approved by Council in late 1997 and a Griffin Reserves Advisory Committee was established by Council to assist with its implementation.

Elizabeth Lander prepared a statement on behalf of the Griffin Reserves Advisory Committee. Its functions are to review the

Plan of Management, advise on aspects on aspects of the use, control and management of the reserves, and to share information about the reserves with the wider community. Eight local residents were appointed to the Committee, together with councillors of the then Middle Harbour Ward and appropriate Council staff. The inaugural meeting was on 14 May 1998, and since then the Committee has made numerous inspections of the reserves, walkways and islands, and met on a regular basis to review specific plans of management and monitor their implementation.

Following a break for refreshments, James Smallhorn (Council's Open Space Officer) and Karl McKillop (Council's Bush Fire Officer) gave detailed presentations on the rehabilitation of the Griffin reserves, walkways and road islands over the past 10 years, and Council's strategy and achievements in ecological burns and hazard reduction. Plans of management for each of the reserves prepared by Council officers in consultation with the Advisory Committee were on display and James provided updates on how these were being implemented. Karl presented case studies of ecological burns in Linden Way, Oriel and Casement Reserves that provided the audience with a good understanding of how today's scientific knowledge of the ecology of Sydney sandstone landforms is applied to regenerating indigenous plant species through the use of fire. He also highlighted the positive impact that resident volunteers (with training through Council's *Bushcare* program) are having, by assisting the regeneration of native species. *Bushcare* assisted reserves are faring much better than those without resident volunteers.

The evening concluded with rigorous discussion of key issue by the audience, which continued over refreshments well beyond the formal closure of the meeting. Alfred Bernhard, Council's Bushland Manager, noted that the additional actions requested by local residents would be dependent on the proposed expansion of the *e-restore* program through an increased levy on ratepayers.

Editor

## Carbon Reduction Action Group for Castlecrag?

About 50 per cent of carbon emissions is related to personal everyday decisions such as how much we drive, fly, heat/cool and power our homes. The next 25 per cent is used to power our workplaces, 20 per cent goes in producing food and goods, and 10 per cent in maintaining public infrastructure and government. Australians (and Americans) average about 19 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per capita per year. Europeans average only 12 tonnes (mainly due to smaller cars, less distance travelled and less air-conditioning). A recent UK study\* argues that can be slashed to 3 tonnes per person without seriously altering Western lifestyles.

So how does each of us find reliable information about how much carbon our household emits? How best (and simply) reduce it? On the next cold morning, should you pull on a woolly jumper (merino, please) or turn on the radiator? If feeling guilty about not cutting carbon emissions, should one try the 'green-salve' of carbon-offsetting (an increasingly questionable response), or is this duck-shoving responsibility to others? Are the Baby-boomers capable of leading this change, or are they just 'green-standing'? Is it Gen X and Y who will show us how to ask for less, rather than more? Is carbon-reduction most effectively done as an individual? Or would some sort of fact-sharing and support be helpful – a sort of 'Carbon-Wasters Anonymous' or even a calorie-counting Weight Watchers?

Should a well-educated and well-off community in an equable climate like Castlecrag investigate forming a C.R.A.G.— a Carbon Reduction Action Group? One model might be a simple, free blog-site with residents able to get facts, swap ideas, trumpet successes, and report problems. At the other extreme, there might be formal membership, measurement of emissions, agreement on limits and striving to keep to budgets. Sharing knowledge about which carbon savings are easy, and which are harder, helps clarify thinking and open us to new ideas. Some people like formal groups, others prefer being kept up to date and

continued on Page 9

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# LETTERS to the Editor

## Solar Power in Castlecrag?

I have established that there is some community interest in installing solar electricity on our houses. The solar panel technology is well-established and the concept of solar power makes a lot of sense as we face the challenge of climate change. Many of us probably hold back from getting a system installed, however, because we do not have a good understanding of the systems, the costs, the available government subsidies and other unknowns. I believe there might be a way of reducing costs and hassles, and therefore I am seeking indications, or informal 'expressions of interest', from interested homeowners, in line with the following logic.

There are potential cost savings in bulk buying and group installations of household solar electricity systems. If there are say 20 households willing to concurrently install solar systems using the same supplier and contractors, then we could all save money and probably also save time dealing with council and contractors.

If there is enough interest perhaps we could hold a community education day / information meeting at the Community Centre where we could have a demonstration unit, disseminate related information, seek other potential buyers, invite the council to present their comments and requirements for approval, and generally have some fun while we all learn.

I'm happy if people email me at bluej@netspace.net.au or call me at home on 9958 1302 (ah) with any related comments to this idea.

**Jon Mason, The Bastion**

## Remembering Castlecrag

Have just been looking at the Castlecrag Progress Association website and have been enjoying myself enormously! Thank you so much for helping me remember my childhood and youth at Castlecrag.

I am Berry (Adams), now Dunston. I was born at Cabarisha in May 1944 and Dr Edward Rivett was present at my birth. My mother was Cecily Adams, who had an interior design business at Castlecrag for many years after the War. She lived at 46 The Parapet, where she started a kindergarten during the war years to help the women who had taken on war jobs while their husbands were away. I remember her funny stories of managing her brood of little children though this time, such as when the air-raid siren on the old chemist shop became stuck and the piercing noise went on and on for hours. She slowly walked with the children all singing along, until they got out of the worst of it down by the water's edge in Sailors Bay, where she let them paddle and play until the noise stopped.

When Cecily became pregnant with me, the kindergarten was relocated to the Stoker's house in Edinburgh Road and later it moved again to the Community Centre, where I was a pupil in the late 1940s. In the late 1970s my own daughter, Emma attended pre-school there too and I was a member of the Kindergarten Union staff at that time.

It is wonderful to meander through the items on the website and remember some of the people and places that provided such a richly textured childhood. For me, the Crag is truly still 'my place' even though I now live in Tasmania. I am in a spot that

somewhat resembles Castlecrag, as it was back then.

The feelings which have been evoked by looking at the web site have made it very clear to me that it is not only our Indigenous Aboriginal peoples for whom there is 'a sense of place'! I will visit the web site regularly now that I have found it and may be found at Sailors Bay water's edge when I am in Sydney, sitting with my childhood memories of jumping on mud crab holes and sailing the VJ yacht, in which I won a Ladies Day race.

Some of your readers may wish to know that Cecily died peacefully in Bowral NSW, aged 93, on 23 December, 2003.

**Berry Dunston, Sandford, Tasmania**

Editors: If any reader would like to make contact with Berry, please get in touch with us at [editors@castlecrag.org.au](mailto:editors@castlecrag.org.au) for details.

## Carbon Reduction Group


*continued from page 8*

occasionally offering suggestions. All preferences would be accommodated.

If you would like to be part of an initial 'Expressions of Interest', please email [info@castlecrag.org.au](mailto:info@castlecrag.org.au) headed 'Carbon Reduction' (your email address will be kept secret if you wish) so that we can plan a meeting in May or June. We are confident that Willoughby City Council will give this support as part of their commitment to sustainability.

**Bruce Wilson**

*\* How to Live a Low-Carbon Life: The Individual's Guide to stopping climate change. Chris Goodall, 2007, Earthscan Publications.*




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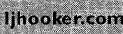
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## Wind in the Willows

Toad, Ratty, Badger and Mr Mole with their friends and enemies came to life at the Haven Amphitheatre in March for eight performances of the classic A.A. Milne adventure story for families. Once again the Haven Management Committee has had a successful collaboration with Julie Mackay and the RAW-EM theatre company (our last being *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the same time last year). This time the weather was much kinder and we lost only one performance due to rain.

*Wind in the Willows* has been our most successful production in recent times. Some of the reviews and comments the show received are:



"The Haven Amphitheatre is an experience in itself. Even the drive down by the mandatory shuttle-bus was informative with the Haven bus driver telling something of the heritage of the area and the venue....



The show was introduced by the internationally acclaimed violinist Alla Sharova (a temporary



'Toad of Toad Hall' makes an appeal to the audience, both young and old, during an afternoon performance of *The Wind in the Willows*. Photo: Bruce Wilson



resident in Castlecrag) who generously gave a few impromptu lessons to the young audience in the front row. Alla then went on to carry the evening musically... Brett Neville gave us the legally blind and befuddled Badger,

Michael Terry was a dastardly, wily Chief Weasel while Olivia Solomons... amply pulled off multi-able roles, including Chief Stoat and the ditzy, impressionable gaoler Phoebe. But there was no denying the star turn, the



stylishly-named Blair Cutting, who while sounding like a matinee idol, looked every bit a toad and relished every line." (*Australian Stage Online*)

There were many other comments from appreciative audience members, including emails and phone calls.



Our thanks to Caroline Foldes for the wonderful photos of Alla Sharova and the cast of *Wind in the Willows*.

### As to what's next?

In September we will be playing our part in Willoughby Council's Spring Festival and towards the end of November the Haven will presenting a production of the Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Howard Rubie

## Dangerous foods for animals

Over the following months we will discuss dangerous foods in *'The Crag'* Newsletter, why they are poisonous and what toxic signs to be aware of in your pet.

Pet owners are often tempted to give table scraps to their pets as a special treat. This seems to be especially true during holidays. Unfortunately, there are some types of human foods that can be dangerous to pets, including:

- Chocolate
- Grapes and sultanas
- Mouldy foods
- Onions
- Macadamia nuts
- Tobacco products

### Grapes and sultanas

Grapes and sultanas do NOT make good treats for dogs and cats because they cause acute kidney failure. The basis for kidney failure is unclear, but is currently being studied.

### How much is dangerous?

The lowest recorded amounts to cause acute kidney failure are:

Grapes: 200g/kg = 5kg dog eating 1kg  
Raisins: 30g/kg = 5kg dog eating 150g (3 x 50g sultana boxes)

However, smaller amounts could also cause problems we really don't know the exact minimum dose nor the risk factors for each animal. All species of dog and cats may be affected. However, cats will not readily eat grapes or sultanas. Birds do not seem to be affected (otherwise we would have no crows feeding on vineyards!).

### What should I do?

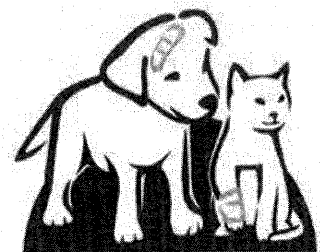
If your pet has eaten a lot of grapes or sultanas bring them to VetMed immediately so we can make them vomit and flush out their stomach. They will also be put on intravenous fluids for 36 to 72 hours. If kidney failure hasn't developed by three days then your pet will remain unaffected.

For more information please call VetMed

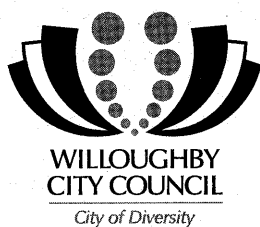
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## Council News

### Opening of Aboriginal Heritage Office

The north shore's Aboriginal Heritage Office and Education Centre will officially open 6pm – 8pm, Wednesday 12 March with a smoking ceremony, didgeridoo performance, guest speakers and bush tucker. The Office, located at unit 39, 137 – 145 Sailors Bay Rd, Northbridge, is a joint initiative of Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Warringah and Willoughby Councils and aims to protect original heritage within these local government areas.

Today more than a thousand sites of Aboriginal culture and heritage remain in the areas of Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Warringah and Willoughby. These irreplaceable sites are under threat from every day development, vandalism and natural erosion. Part of the work of the Aboriginal Heritage Office is to monitor Aboriginal sites on a daily basis and develop long term management reports to ensure their preservations and protection.

The office also helps schools and other groups to teach children about Aboriginal culture and history and provides Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people involved in the region with an avenue of approach to discuss issues or concerns.

Willoughby Mayor and President of the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC), Pat Reilly said: 'The Aboriginal Heritage Office is a wonderful public resource and reference centre that houses a Keeping Place for Indigenous artefacts, objects and cultural materials and is open to all members of the public. He added, 'The centre also hosts a number of events including Yarn Up held fortnightly at the centre featuring guest speakers from various members of the Aboriginal community.'

### Earth Hour 2008

Willoughby City Council encouraged all residents to switch off their lights in the name of global warming for Earth Hour and are inviting residents to partake in a bees wax candlelit picnic at 6.30pm, Saturday 29 March at Warners Park, The Outpost, Northbridge. The event was hosted by Willoughby City Council, the North Shore Climate Action, and Sustainability Street Corporate & Transport Committee.

Attendees heard speaker Brian Moran, a lecturer on sustainability at Sydney's University of Technology, provide tips and advice on green living, before the countdown at ten seconds to 8pm for all lights to be switched off. Bees wax candles, which produce zero greenhouse emissions, were sold on the night with all funds raised going towards a collection of sustainability books for Northbridge Library.

Willoughby Mayor Pat Reilly said that participating in Earth Hour is a great way for the local community to show it is possible to take action on global warming. He said 'Earth Hour is a great opportunity to spread the global warming message while also providing a rare chance for us all to see the stars with less glare from city lights.'

Rebecca Hill

## Feral shopping trolleys

As readers of *The Crag* will be aware, I have always been concerned about local issues and firmly believe local government is all about baseline matters. Rubbish, roads and responsible local communities without political parties, and the people who represent them (on all sides) trying to create their own agenda are at the centre of effective local government.

Abandoned shopping trolleys have become a critical local issue and are nothing better than litter upon our streets. The level of frustration that is being generated by the unthinking people who litter our streets with these trolleys and the retail firms who appear to avoid responsibility for properly managing their trolleys has generated several letters in the *North Shore Times*.

It is an issue that can be solved at a local level and it sits in the lap of the ones causing the problem. In response to a letter in the *North Shore Times* from a representative of Trolley Services Australia attacking comments by Cr Fogarty on this subject and denying any responsibility for abandoned trolleys, I have personally written to this firm and asked them to examine better technology and management practices that will reduce the risk of abandoned shopping trolleys on our streets and in our public spaces.

Cr Trevor Morgan  
Sailors Bay Ward

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## Community Notice Board

### Community Organisations

#### Castlecrag Progress Association:

*'Representing the Castlecrag Community'*

**Annual General Meeting:** Sunday 18 May at 11.30am at the Castlecrag Community Centre, with guest speaker Dr Frank Talbot, a leading conservationist who now heads the Sydney Institute of Marine Science at Chowder Bay (see page 5). All welcome and bring a plate and drinks to join us for a social get together over lunch in grounds of the Community Centre. Information: [info@castlecrag.org.au](mailto:info@castlecrag.org.au)

#### Castlecrag Conservation Society:

At the Annual General Meeting, to be held on Thursday 24 April at the Castlecrag Community Centre at 8pm, Mark Crew will speak about his trip to the Kimberleys. Information: Harold Spies 9958 8569.

#### CragSitters:

Members' gathering on Sunday 11 May at Stoker Playground from 3.30 pm. New members are most welcome. Contact Sharie at: [cragstitters@yahoo.com.au](mailto:cragstitters@yahoo.com.au)

#### Castlecrag Community Library:

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

### Other Events / Notices

#### 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 David Garrett on Othello on Saturday 3 May. On 7 June Moffatt Oxenbould will speak on 'Lucia in Australia' and Stuart Maunder will cover My Fair Lady on 5 July, with David Garrett returning on 2 August to explain Orlando. Further information: Shirley Robertson 9605 5851 or Nancy Fleming 9958 3110.

#### Willoughby Symphony Choir:

Sunday 27 April, 'Raising the Spirit' concert at St Mary's Church, 264 Miller Street, North Sydney at 3pm. Tickets \$22 pre booked, \$35 at the door. Phone: 9777 7547.

#### Bai Yok Restaurant:

Kate Westoby extends her thanks to Michael and staff at the Bai Yok for the safe keeping and return of her camera inadvertently left at the restaurant.

#### Willoughby Families Picnic Day:

Sunday 18 May from 10.30am-2.30pm in Willoughby Park with lots of fun activities for all the family. BYO lunch or buy a sausage sandwich and drinks. Phone Cassie Otter 9777 7723.

#### Bushcare Training Workshops:

Willoughby City Council is conducting training workshops in three sessions from 9am-1pm on Saturday 14 June (introduction to bush regeneration), Saturday 21 June (woody weeds and OH&S) and 28 June (regeneration strategies, fauna issues and site assessment). The venue will be advised when bookings are made. Contact Mandy Wilson on 9777 7875.

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



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