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OUR NEXT MEETING:

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 23 March, 2010

7.30pm for 8.00pm

Refreshments will be served

Guest Speaker:

Nick Tobin,

*General Manager of
Willoughby City Council*

will provide a 3-D fly-through presentation on The Concourse - see page 6 for details.

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

'Carols Spectacular' at The Haven



The Haven Amphitheatre was packed out for the Carols Spectacular on Christmas Eve. Photo courtesy The Haven Committee.

The 2009 Carols by Candlelight at the Haven Amphitheatre well deserved the descriptor 'SPECTACULAR'.

The Savoy Arts Singers formed a 13 voice choir made up of professional performers, each a recognised soloist, and a professional nine piece Haven Orchestra, all conducted by musical director Prue Gibbs who had put together a fantastic programme of music. The performances were augmented by the appearance of six local children aged between four and eight years of age who were dressed as the most delightful Six White Boomers imaginable.

Vice President of the Haven Amphitheatre Committee, Lindy Batterham, gave the Acknowledgement to Country which was followed by Leonard Cohen's *Allelujah* performed by local singer/musician Noah Alessandro Verin.

Soloists included soprano Valda Wilson, who has been performing overseas and had returned to spend Christmas with her family in Castlecrag and to perform for the Haven once again before returning to Europe for engagements with a number of opera houses.

The children all patiently waited for Santa to appear and artistic director, Marlene Vaughan, finally got to sit on Santa's lap to read out her very long list of requests for

Christmas 2009 in a vocal arrangement by local musician Graham Jesse.

Film producer and President of the Haven Amphitheatre Committee, Howard Rubie, had arranged for the spectacular event to be recorded for a DVD to be produced as an historical document and a memento of this wonderful evening under the stars. One of the many highlights of the evening was Daniel Tambasco's rendition of Puccini's *Nessun Dorma*.

Local community groups banded together to support this event and generous donations were made by Willoughby City Council, Castlecrag Progress Association, Haven Amphitheatre and Walter Burley Griffin Society towards the production and capturing for posterity.

Jack Metcalf, the project's manager, worked diligently throughout the four months of planning for this event. He demonstrated impeccable attention to detail in making sure that people and equipment were in place; even managing excellent weather for the event!

Despite the crowds that attended the Carols by Candlelight Spectacular, arrival and departure from the Amphitheatre was well organised and most locals were home by 9.45 pm, apart from those who stayed to strike the set and party afterwards.

Marlene Vaughan

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the
Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

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Castlecrag NSW 2068

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www.castlecrag.org.au

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info@castlecrag.org.au

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

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- Gay Spies OAM Bruce Wilson

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Community Bytes

At the Shops

We welcome Jean and Beth, the proprietors of our latest shop, Palm Beach Home, to the Castlecrag shopping village. Beth has operated the original Palm Beach Home store at its namesake location for the past five years and they decided to take up the opportunity offered by the closure of our former newsagent and open a branch here. It opened in early December 2009 with Jean managing the new outlet.

Palm Beach Home specialises in a wide range of gifts, furniture, cloths and books (primarily architecture and food topics). Their brands include iitalia, Missoni, Ortiga and Bassike among many others. Jean advises that they have received a warm welcome here and they look forward to a long association with our community here in the Crag.

Jodie McGregor Flowers was again awarded the North Shore Times True Local Florist of the Year 2009, following its success in the same category in 2008. Narelle Stillman at Jodie McGregor Flowers was a finalist for the Employee of the Year. *The Crag* extends its congratulations to Narelle, Adrienne, Sarah and Jodie for their achievements. Among our other businesses, Castlecrag Pharmacy, Gourmet Source (for the second year running) and the Post Office were finalists in their respective categories of the North Shore Times business awards, while Con at Gourmet Source was also a finalist for the Employee of the Year.

Speeding on Edinburgh Road

Speeding on Edinburgh Road has been a matter of concern to local residents for many years, particularly in relation to the

Montessori Preschool at St James' Church. The matter was considered by the Willoughby Traffic Committee in June 2008. It was decided that the recent construction of a median island on the eastbound approach to the school and marked bicycle lanes would contribute to reduced speeds. Use of Council's VMS unit was also implemented to advise motorists of their speed. Traffic volume and speed counts taken in March 2004 showed an average of 2700 vehicles a day travelling past the Montessori Preschool with an 85th percentile speed of 56km/h. Traffic counts taken at this location in June 2009 showed that the 85th percentile speed had risen to 59km/h, while that on Edinburgh Road at the Stoker Playground (224 Edinburgh Road) it was 63km/h.

The Willoughby Traffic Committee considered this problem at its meeting on 18 February 2010 and agreed that further measures were required to address the ongoing speeding problems on Edinburgh Road. It was resolved that designs prepared for pedestrian refuges or traffic islands on Edinburgh Road immediately west of The Citadel (the Montessori Preschool) and in the vicinity of 220 Edinburgh Road. Following community consultation, these designs will be brought back to the Committee for approval. In the interim, the Police will be taking more regular action against speeding. Traffic issues addressed at earlier Willoughby Traffic Committee meetings are covered in the article on page 9.

Australia Day in Willoughby

The Progress Association was represented at Willoughby's Australia Day ceremony held in The Mall. Our Ambassador this year was Neville Roach AO, an Indian businessman


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Community Bytes cont...

who first came to Sydney in 1961 and who has been a leader in building links between Australia and India. He gave an excellent analysis of the importance of the links between the two countries and tackled the present controversy surrounding that relationship in a forthright and even-handed manner.

While there were no Castlecrag residents listed in the Australia Day awards this year, the Mayor announced at the ceremony that Cr Judith Rutherford had been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her work in music therapy, promoting Asian art and as a local government councillor. *The Crag* extends its congratulations to Judith for this recognition of her work. The Willoughby Citizenship Awards for 2010 were:

- Services to Young People:** Joy Sweeney
- Cultural & Community Building Award:** Donald McPhail and Anne Weinart, the Editor of the *Artarmon Gazette*:

Signing off

It has not been the practice of this newsletter to run editorials on personal issues but just this once I'm taking this indulgence to make an announcement that this will be the last issue of *The Crag* under my tenure as editor.

Kerry and I came to live in Castlecrag from Papua New Guinea in early 1976. We were very much outsiders with little knowledge of the suburb's wealth of history and community. We had the opportunity for some quick learning, however, as the community had banded together to plan and implement the fantastic 'Castlecrag Heritage Festival' from 3-11 April that year as part of the Australian American Festival of Sydney. It featured an exhibition titled 'Walter Burley Griffin and his Castlecrag', and several of the Griffin houses were open for inspection. We still recall with wonder our experience of Friedel Souhami showing us through her unique home, the Cheong House.

We became close friends with Rita and Eric Kaye and through them became engaged in various community activities. I was roped into various campaigns relating to the Warringah Expressway lands and Kerry assisted Rita to edit *The Crag* from May 1986, taking over with Mary Baker as

congratulations Anne from your counterparts in Castlecrag.

Citizens of the Year: Martin McCurrich and Ann Barnacoat.

Gargoyles, Cannons and plans for our Reserves

The Griffin Advisory Committee invites you to join Councillor Gail Giles-Gidney in a walk led by botanist and Castlecrag resident, Professor Carrick Chambers. Discover the magic of Oriel, Gargoyle and Embrasure Reserves. Learn about Council's plans for the Griffin Reserves and in particular the walk from The Citadel to The Bastion via Oriel, Gargoyle and Embrasure Reserves. What do cannons have to do with it?

After the walk, free BBQ sausage sandwiches with tea and coffee will be provided by Willoughby City Council. Children are welcome.

The morning is being organised by the Griffin Reserves Advisory Committee, a sub-committee of Willoughby Council

comprising residents of Castlecrag, Councillors Adrian Cox and Gail Giles-Gidney as well as Council employees.

Date: Sunday 21 March. Time: Two scheduled guided walks at 10.30am and 11.15am. Meet at Oriel Reserve, entering from the end of The Citadel or via The Bartizan. The barbecue will in operation 10am-12noon.

Matthew Keighery

Phone Books and the Environment

Would you prefer not to receive phone books, White Pages or Yellow Pages, or both? Maybe you only need new ones every second or third year? Or perhaps on-line search suffices in your home? The only way to prevent delivery of unwanted phone books is to phone Sensis at 1800 008 292. (They do not accept email or snail mail.) They will ask for full name, address and your landline phone number to confirm the address. Why not 'reduce' unwanted phone books and act now?

Bruce Wilson

editors with issue No. 58, April-May 1988. This was the era when *The Crag* was printed by Gordon Businessprint from sheets typed out on an electronic typewriter (ours) and pasted up by the editors. Any photos used had to be monochrome and screened by the printer.

A significant step forward occurred in 1996 when Adele Barnett joined the editorial team and introduced 'desk top publishing', giving our layout a professional appearance. Following a serious accident in late 1999, Adele was unable to continue and Elizabeth Lander assisted Kerry in the editing role, while Kerry and I did the layout as best we could using MS Publisher. I was called on to play an increasing role in the editing and production of the newsletter over this period and it was decreed that my name should appear as editor from issue 152 (June 2004).

One of the many friends we have made through our involvement in *The Crag* is Robin Phelan and the next big step in the evolution of our newsletter occurred when she agreed to take on the layout for each issue as her voluntary contribution to the community. Hence, from issue 159 (May 2006) we have delivered a highly professional layout and, I believe, this has

also stimulated a steady improvement in the breadth and quality of our content.

Institutions such as *The Crag* require change and there comes a time to step aside to encourage others to give them new vitality. I have significant surgery scheduled for the end of the month that will put me 'out of action' for some time and following that we have some travel plans. Accordingly, I advised the Progress Association committee last November of my intention to step down as editor.

That means there is an opportunity for an interested Castlecrag resident to take up the reins. We now have a good set of procedures in place for the preparation, editing and production of *The Crag* and the good news is that Robin has agreed to continue doing the layout and organising printing. Our experienced assistant editor, Margaret Chambers, is also prepared to continue as time permits, providing the new editor with sound advice on style and process.

So please give this opportunity careful thought, then step forward and contact Jill Newton at 9967 4933 or email info@castlecrag.org.au

Bob McKillop

Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. Membership Form

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2010

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Steven Head presentation at Castlecrag

As advertised in our October 2009 issue, the guest speaker at the general meeting of the Progress Association that month was Steven Head, the Infrastructure Services Manager at Willoughby City Council. The following is an abbreviated report on his presentation.

To set the context of forward planning in Willoughby, Steven highlighted the NSW Government's Integrated Planning Model, that requires councils to better integrate their local planning. It is now mandatory for councils to have a Community Strategy and Willoughby cover this in its City Strategy, which is currently being updated in response to emerging issues. Councils are now required to have a four-year delivery programme and a single year operational plan, supported by a Resourcing Strategy that encompasses an Asset Management Plan, a long-term Financial Plan and a Work Force Plan.

Council utilises these plans to assess its infrastructure proposals and open space responses. These must respond to the status of existing infrastructure and the human resource skills needed to carry out the plans. Council feels it is well ahead of the overall planning game at this point, though there is scope for better integration.

Steven spoke of individual projects that are of interest to the Castlecrag community. The broader city-wide projects were:

- 1. The Griffin-designed Willoughby Incinerator:** Council is proud of its project to restore fully this iconic building, but difficulties experienced with the chimney following the various attempts at 'restoration' over the years had made the chimney a bigger problem in the long run. Steven presented slides of the interior during the recent Sculpture Exhibition and invited residents to take advantage of the restored building when the project is completed in the New Year and it is returned to community use.
- 2. Civic Place:** Steven presented a 'helicopter view' of the Civic Place site taken in recent weeks. He noted that the two car park levels are virtually complete and the overall project was 40 per cent complete in October, when it was running six weeks ahead of

schedule. Community information sessions and regular site tours are available for the public and Steven urged residents to take advantage of these opportunities.

- 3. Chatswood Mall Design:** Design concepts for upgrading the Mall are currently being turned into detailed design and Steven presented an artist's impression of the changes. The Mall will change from two lines to a central line of trees to provide wider walkways along each side. Granite paver blocks will be used for the footpaths.
- 4. Open Space and Management Plan:** Council is developing this plan, which fits into the broader planning framework. It will probably go on exhibition in early 2010.

Castlecrag specific matters covered by Steven were as follows:

- 1. Cortile Reserve Action Plan:** Council officers are very pleased with how this is moving ahead and he noted that details were reported in the October issue of *The Crag*.
- 2. Beverley Blacklock Reserve Action Plan:** This has taken a long time to get together but is now progressing. A slide of the agreed plan was presented.
- 3. Warners Park:** The upgrade of this space has come together in an excellent manner, giving a lot of great recreational space for children.
- 4. Right-hand turn arrow to Eastern Valley Way:** Steven noted an update on this matter in *The Crag*. He had personally been surprised with how responsive the RTA officials were at the meeting. He reported that Council has written the letter with details agreed at the meeting and RTA has agreed to undertake modelling.
- 5. Speeding on Edinburgh Road:** Council had issued a letter recently warning residents that speeds are far too high in the school zones. Currently an educational campaign is being implemented to target a number of local roads on speed limits and other safety measures. This included Edinburgh Road, where the speed display trailer has been used to help

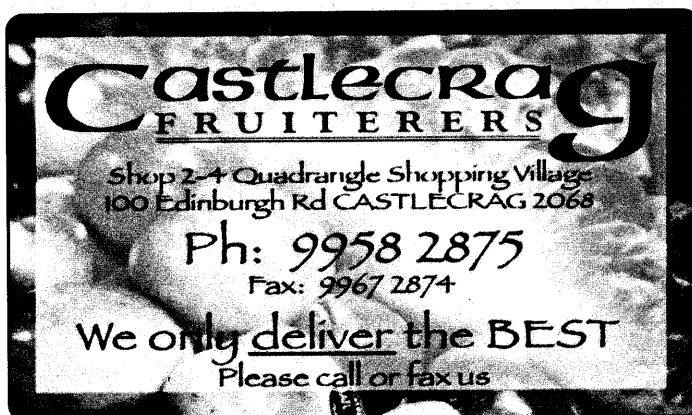
raise awareness of speed, and other approaches are being tested to try to reduce traffic speed. Following the educational campaign and further speed counts, Council will look at installing pedestrian refuges and some speed devices near the school and near the bend in Edinburgh Road, but this will only occur if there is strong and uniform community support. Council has formally asked the Police to undertake enforcement of the speed limit on Edinburgh Road, but has no reports of action having been taken.

- 6. Griffin walkways:** Steven noted that there is a whole system of walkways in Castlecrag that takes pedestrians off roads. Council is working towards improving these walkways to encourage greater use by local residents and visitors alike.

There was then lively discussion on specific questions from the audience as follows:

- 1. What are Council's long-term plans regarding stormwater management?** SH responded there are opportunities to do a lot of useful work in the area, such as adopting more innovative ways of slowing water flow and helping it to soak into the ground. These are expensive to implement, so will be a longer-term issue. Our first priority is to stop water getting into people's homes.
- 2. Given recent damage to trees in Castlecrag by large trucks, does Council have a policy on large pieces of plant coming into narrow residential streets?** SH noted the issue of a semi-trailer that had damaged the Griffin memorial fountain recently; this was a contract to Council and unfortunately supervisor had left the site when the damage occurred. It demonstrated the difficulty of enforcing the measures that Council puts in place to avoid incidents such as this.
- 3. Conflict between traffic and pedestrians in Castlecrag residential streets.** Several speakers highlighted this issue, particularly at

continued on page 6



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Vale: Margaret Donnelley 1924-2009



Margaret at her Diamond Wedding Anniversary, May 2009. Ros Clancy photo.

On 12 December 2009 family and friends gathered at the Castlecrag Community Centre to celebrate the life of Margaret Donnelley who died in October.

Margaret and her husband Bill have been active and much loved members of the Castlecrag community since 1962. Their four children, Brian, Susan, Clare and Celia, were able to attend the celebration and spoke of their happy childhood in Castlecrag. Margaret's brother Brian Gilpin spoke of their childhood in Ballarat, her friend Joan Satchwell recalled their years at Melbourne University and Bill described her distinguished career at the Walter & Eliza Hall Institute in Melbourne. Several residents also paid tribute to Margaret's contribution to Castlecrag.

With her three brothers Margaret grew up in Ballarat where after becoming dux of Ballarat High School she was awarded a medical scholarship to the University of Melbourne with a residential scholarship to Janet Clarke Hall.

In 1946 in her fourth year Margaret dropped her medical course and took a job at CSL. Later that year, after meeting Bill, she returned to university and completed a B Sc in bacteriology, leading to her employment for four years at the Walter & Eliza Hall Institute on projects overseen by Professor

(later Sir Frank) Macfarlane Burnet. Research into typhus, influenza and Murray Valley encephalitis was documented in a number of very significant scientific papers. During the 1970s Margaret also demonstrated to students of Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney.

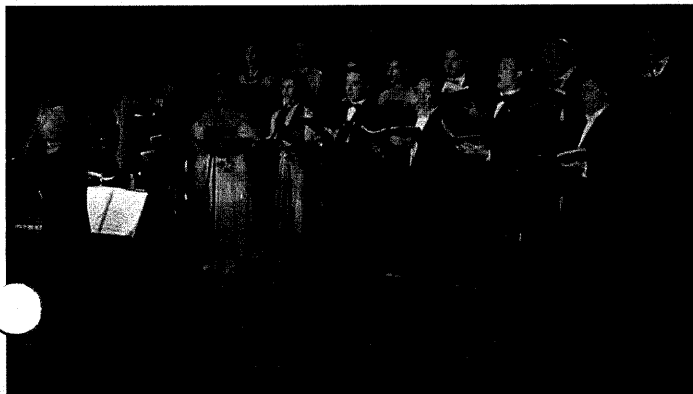
Margaret and Bill were married in 1949. After the birth of their four children the family moved to Sydney in 1961 when Bill was appointed to IBM. They bought a block of land in The Bulwark, moved into their new house in 1962 and since then have been part of the fabric of Castlecrag.

In May 2009 Margaret and Bill celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, a very happy occasion at which the attached photograph was taken. Margaret had been frail for many years, but accepted her lot with good humour and maintained an active social and intellectual life.

Margaret's cheerful and active presence will be sadly missed by her many friends in Castlecrag, and by the groups which she and Bill have loyally supported over many years. These include the Castlecrag Progress Association, the Castlecrag Conservation Society, The Castlecrag Play Reading Group, the Sydney Opera Society and the Melbourne University Alumni Association.

Bill Donnelley & Margaret Chambers

More 'Carols Spectacular' at The Haven...

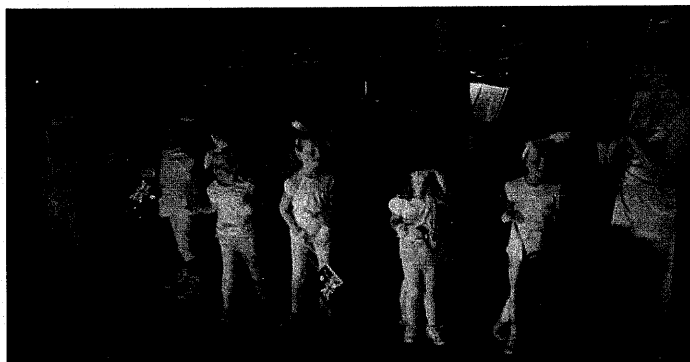


Above: The Savoy Arts Singers formed a 13 voice choir made up of professional performers, each a recognised soloist.

Top Right: Musical Director Prue Gibbs, put together a fantastic programme of music, while Artistic Director Marlene Vaughan finally got to meet Santa.

Right: "Six White Boomers" performing at the Carols Spectacular.

Photos courtesy The Haven Committee.




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Community update on The Concourse

Willoughby City Council has announced that its Civic Place project is to be known as The Concourse (see page 11). It is:

To be a place where everyone feels at home. A place where world class performances and school concerts both belong. Where a meeting can be a 1000 people, or dinner for two. Where you can borrow a great book, then relax on the grass and enjoy it.

Nick Tobin, General Manager at Willoughby City Council, will be our guest at the CPA General Meeting on 23 March to deliver a pictorial presentation on The Concourse. The three-dimensional fly-through presentation will cover the library, facilities for community use and other leisure facilities designed to make The Concourse a vibrant centre of our city community. Eilis O'Beirne, Council's Events & Special Projects Manager, will also be available to answer your questions. Your Ward Councillors will be present to field your queries on matters of local concern. The presentation will commence at 8pm, with a short formal meeting to follow that and then supper to make for an enjoyable social outing.

Please come along and learn more about this important project.

Venue:

Castlecrag Community Centre, The Rampart

Date and time:

Tuesday 23 March; 7.30pm for 8.00pm.
Refreshments will be served

Contact your Ward Councillors

If you have questions or issues to raise with your Ward Councillors, they are happy to be contacted:

Adrian.Cox@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Or phone 9958 1135

Gail.Giles-Gidney@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Or phone 0438 633 587

John.Hooper@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Or phone 0418 239 195

Stephen Head presentation *Continued from page 4*

the eastern end of Edinburgh Road and The Bulwark where there are no footpaths. SH responded that Alfred Bernhard's section has nominated a staff member to liaise with communities on their concerns regarding issues such as this. Residents who have concerns should report them to this Council unit.

4. **Removal of the street tree in Edinburgh Road opposite the Griffin Centre.** Several speakers expressed concern at this, claiming that the tree was in sound condition and suggesting that Council should review its policy of removing trees. SH responded that the successful management of a tree resource in a city needs to look at the overall status of trees in its whole area and to follow a cost-effective strategy in managing this stock in optimum condition. Council cannot focus resources on individual trees nor is it in a position where it can notify communities when trees are to be removed. SH said that he had been involved in coroners' inquests following the deaths of residents from falling tree branches and it was not an experience he wishes to repeat. With the resources it has available Council can only respond to requests for the removal of mature trees across the city each year and replace them with a

greater number of new plantings. Its objective is to maintain a green environment that retains the character of Willoughby's streets while minimising risks to residents. He concluded by stating that proactive management of Council's tree resource is beyond its current capacity.

5. **How will Council respond to emerging policies on road pricing to reduce congestion and greenhouse emissions?** SH: Council has undertaken a lot of micro-analysis of traffic congestion in the CBD which shows that it is already congested and will get a lot worse. Changes will be needed or we will not be able to function as a city. Cr Fogarty added that it was time this issue received serious debate and action needs to be taken. SH also mentioned the Artarmon Loop bus service, which is now handling about 4000 passengers per week. Although it has been successful in encouraging people to use public transport to travel further, more needs to be done to get people out of their cars and onto public transport. Council is looking at extending services of this nature for peninsular suburbs such as Castlecrag.

Editors

Paul Morrow 1985-2009

Paul Morrow lived in Castlecrag from 1994 until 2008 when he moved to Holland to study at the University of Technology in Delft. Paul died suddenly on 2 July 2009 in Rotterdam, Holland. He was 24 years old.

Paul started his education at Castlecrag Kindergarten and then attended St Thomas' Primary School in Willoughby before going to St Ignatius College, Riverview. After leaving school he commenced his Bachelor of Construction degree at the University of Technology, Sydney where he successfully applied for an exchange program with Delft University of Technology.

Paul made many close friends whilst living in Castlecrag. He took full advantage of the many benefits that Castlecrag offers a young man growing, including exploring the bush, playing cricket in the street, rugby in the backyard, water bomb fights on hot summers days with neighbouring children and some poor attempts at fishing. Paul also had a love of Art which he explored with many of his local friends.

Paul is greatly missed by his family and many friends in the Castlecrag community.

Garry and Catherine Morrow

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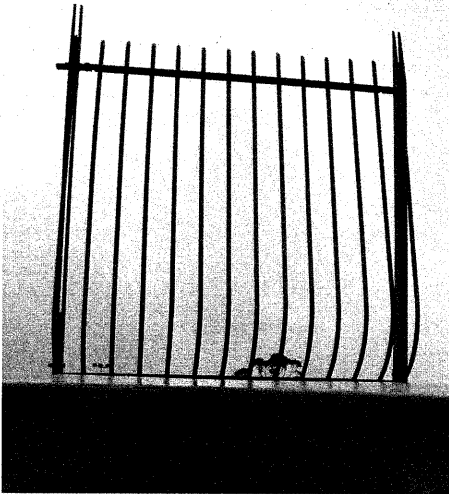
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Northbridge Suspension Bridge update



The safety fence module as demonstrated at Northbridge Oval on Saturday 6 February. Bruce Wilson photo.

In the October issue of *The Crag* we reported on the then 'state of play' regarding the proposal by the Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) to erect an obtrusive safety barrier on the heritage-listed Suspension Bridge between Northbridge and Cammerary in response to a recommendation by the Coroner for barriers to reduce the risk of suicides. A meeting was held at St Mark's Hall, Northbridge, on 17 December for the RTA to provide an update to local residents on the status of the project.

Some 80-100 residents from Northbridge, Castlecrag and Cammerary, together with representatives of Willoughby City and North Sydney Councils, attended the

meeting organised by Willoughby MP Gladys Berejikilian and Cr Gail Giles-Gidney. It was a highly aggressive and unruly affair, with many people coming to tell the RTA what they thought of its proposal and demand an alternative; while the RTA, through its communications manager, Fiona Court, stated that it was there to brief the community on the design process; renegotiation of the safety fence design was not an option. There was much angst, both between residents and the RTA and between those in the audience who supported the proposed measures and those who demanded the RTA start the design process over again. A number of the latter group stormed out during the first half-hour of the meeting.

Those who sat through the 'grandstanding' stages heard a well-presented and sincere account by Mary Knaggs of the Government Architects' Office on the process that had been followed and the options that had been assessed in arriving at the proposed design. She highlighted heritage, suicide prevention, aesthetic, pedestrian security and maintenance issues that were assessed during the process. A key issue was that the option to construct a protected pedestrian walkway on the side of the bridge below the level of the existing roadway had been assessed and rejected on heritage, pedestrian security and maintenance grounds, including the risk it would create an opportunity for graffiti damage. The proposed fence was not 'like a pool fence', but had been carefully designed in accordance with current international practice to minimise its impact on the heritage structure.

Several in the audience said that they had come to the meeting opposed to the RTA proposal, but the presentation by Mary Knaggs had provided them with the necessary background to understand better what was proposed and they now felt it was a sympathetic addition to the bridge. They added that it was a great pity that the RTA had not adequately consulted with the community during the early stages of the design process. The overall mood of the meeting highlighted the Authority's abject failure on this score.

A number of positive proposals were put forward from the floor and we understand these are being considered by the RTA. These include the need for local residents to see the mock-up sections of the options for the safety fence, preferably at a convenient location to allow a large number of residents to inspect them; and the scope for incorporating 'active' features into the design that would cause a would-be suicide to pause and reconsider his or her action. This could include a thin trigger wire at the top of the fence that would set off blue and orange flashing lights, an alarm and CCTV cameras, thereby causing the would-be suicide to pause while alerting those who could try to prevent the suicide attempt.

Modules of the proposed safety fence design were displayed at Northbridge Oval on Saturday 6 February. Construction commenced on 22 February with a scheduled completion in May 2010. There has been no definitive advice re incorporation of 'active' features.

Bob McKillop

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LETTERS to the Editor

Parking at Northbridge Baths

Northbridge Baths and Marina are special places for Willoughby residents and visitors to enjoy. Unfortunately during the hot season from 1 November to 28 February parking there can become very difficult!

Council's large sign indicates a maximum stay of four hours during summer weekends, public holidays and school holidays in the carpark. On Widgiewa Road itself, there should be no cars parked at all, as there are a designated footpath down the eastern side and 'No Parking' restrictions on the western side.

Commonsense shows how dangerous it can be for young families with small children, strollers and baskets to walk on Widgiewa Road when cars are parked to the fence, and ascending and descending vehicles are eyeballing each other to seek right of way.

It is a situation that requires all those accessing the Baths to help each other. If you are planning to spend more than four hours at the Baths or on a boat, why not drive down to the carpark; unload your family and belongings, and then drive back up to Coorabin, Minimbah or Courallie Roads?

There are at least 50 parking spots within two minutes walk of the Baths, some in shade. Of course, if you live within 1500 metres and have no children to carry, why not simply walk as a personal mini 'biathlon'. If you live further away, why not 'carpool' to the pool? And for those who selfishly exceed the 4 hour limit, Council's rangers have been asked to actively enforce the parking laws.

**Bruce Wilson,
Raeburn Avenue**

Editors Note:

This matter was considered by the Willoughby Traffic Committee on 17 February 2010. Council officers had assessed the parking situation at the Northbridge Baths and put forward a number of proposals to address the problems encountered there on weekends during the summer months. The Committee resolved that the eastern side of Widgiewa Road be designated 'No Parking'. The existing signposting will be

replaced with more prominent signs.

Council Parking Officers will be asked to provide periodic enforcement of the restrictions, particularly on warm summer weekends.

Noise pollution in The Crag

There is a disturbing trend emerging in Castlecrag of early morning walkers making noise. I have been woken on a number of occasions by groups of walkers talking very loudly.

There is good reason why Council does not permit construction work before 7am Monday to Saturday, and not at all on Sunday. You would think courtesy and common sense would dictate to these early morning walkers to apply the same principles. If you are out before 7am, please respect your fellow residents and be quiet!

What is most disturbing about this situation, is that early walkers even need to be requested to be quiet. It appears that many of the people who have moved into Castlecrag in recent years lack an appreciation for others.

**Andrew Pritchard,
Edinburgh Road**

BUK BILONG PIKININI sends thanks

Buk Bilong Pikinini (BBP) is a voluntary group in Papua New Guinea which has been creating small libraries in Port Moresby, Lae and beyond to give disadvantaged children access to books and improve literacy. Sponsorships enable them to engage teachers to run the libraries.

To start a new library they need at least 1500 books, educational toys and craft materials.

Castlecrag has made a contribution—early this year we sent a large box of books from a giving tree at The Bulwark, The Scarp and Neighbours Christmas street party. Added to this was a pile of books left over from the Castlecrag Fair.

We have received a thankyou letter from the BBP founder and co-ordinator, Anne-Sophie Hermann, wife of Australia's High Commissioner to PNG. We pass on thanks to all the generous Castlecrag folk who have donated lovely books to BBP. If you have any gently-used children's books (or pencils, drawing books etc), we can pass them on. Just drop them in to 70 The Bulwark, or phone Lorraine on 9958 1213 and we can pick up. Just one book makes a real difference!

More info at www.bukbilongpikinini.org

Lorraine Cairnes

↔ Community ↔ Exchange ↔

The Crag has received several requests from readers to publish items seeking information or promoting an event or some similar happening. In response to these requests, we have decided to introduce Community Exchange as a venue where residents can post information to promote their request or cause. A fee of \$20 will apply for items listed in the exchange section (with discounts to CPA members). The initial entries are:

↔ Dry Yoga classes

Dry Yoga classes are held at The Haven Amphitheatre on Fridays from 10-11.30am. Complimentary for the first class, \$17 for casual classes and \$60 for a block of four classes. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a mat, blanket and water.

Contact Katya on 0414 187 916 or email: kmarden1@gmail.com

Please contact the editors at the email address given on page 2, or via 9967 4933 if you have items for the 'Community Exchange'.

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How is Willoughby tackling its traffic problems?

A summary of some of the key issues tackled by the Willoughby Traffic Committee (WTC) of late will be covered here. Traffic committees are technical committees of the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and cover specific local government areas. Councils are delegated certain powers by the RTA with regard to traffic matters on their local roads and a condition of this delegation is that councils must take into account Traffic Committee recommendations.

The Willoughby Traffic Committee is chaired by James Brocklebank (WCC Engineering Services Manager) and the voting members are the RTA, the local State Member of Parliament, the NSW Police and Willoughby City Council. I attend as the representative of the Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations.

Most of the items before the committee are raised by residents in local streets regarding the impact of parking by commuters, speeding or alleged traffic hazards. The impact of large construction projects on traffic in specific localities is also a regular concern. Where assessments by Council officers indicate that measures are required to address an issue, the WTC recommends appropriate parking restrictions, zone changes, pedestrian refuges, traffic calming devices, road closures, etc be approved and these recommendations are sent to Council's Corporate & Transport Committee for implementation approval. Invariably the measures involve the erection of various types of road signs. Queries have been raised at the WTC regarding the need for criteria on the number of road signs that are desirable per kilometre of road!

A key issue of concern at recent meetings has been the significant increase in traffic congestion in and around the Chatswood CBD and, in particular, disruption of public transport timetables. The entrance to Chatswood Chase is a particular trouble spot highlighted by representatives of Sydney Buses. Council's micro-simulation model showed that the preferred option is to restrict Victoria Avenue to buses and taxis, but implementation is dependent on construction of a northern bypass to the CBD, a very long-term project requiring considerable land resumptions. A shift to public transport, walking and cycling to the CBD is the only current solution to the problem.

The availability of drop off points where motorists can set down or pick up passengers using the railway stations in Willoughby City was raised at the January meeting of the WTC. While there are designated drop off points around the Chatswood railway station, it was pointed out at the meeting that it is permissible to drop off or pick up passengers in vacant metered parking spaces and loading zones provided the driver does not leave the vehicle, but NOT in designated bus zones. PA newsletter editors were asked to promote this advice to their readers.

For South Willoughby, Northbridge and Castlecrag residents a major issue has become the extreme congestion in the residential streets around Bicentennial Reserve on Saturdays during the winter netball season. To enhance the measures implemented over the past two seasons, Council traffic engineers have undertaken a thorough analysis of continuing problems

and presented a series of additional steps to address these at the November 2009 and January 2010 meetings.

Intersection modelling to assess options to improve traffic flow at the Willoughby Road/Small Street and Alpha Road/Sailors Bay Road signalised intersections showed poor performance at both intersections due to the need for traffic to merge into one lane after the intersection on both Willoughby Road and Alpha Road. As with many efforts by Council to address traffic issues on local streets, its ability to improve the Bicentennial Reserve problems is hindered by RTA control of arterial roads. In this instance the WTC has recommended the extension of 'No Parking' restrictions on Council roads at both intersections and a request to the RTA to implement similar restrictions on Willoughby Road.

A new pedestrian crossing will be constructed in Small Street, together with a new entrance to the upper car park from Small Street. On Saturday mornings vehicles coming down Pandy Street will use this entrance, while those coming from the west will use the existing entrance. All vehicles will be required to flow from the top car park through the lower car park to exit on netball season Saturdays, but at other times they may exit via the new entrance on Small Street. The proposals put forward received praise for demonstrating a detailed and thorough analysis of these complex issues and effective solutions were put forward to address them.

Bob McKillop

R&W Northbridge Castlecrag

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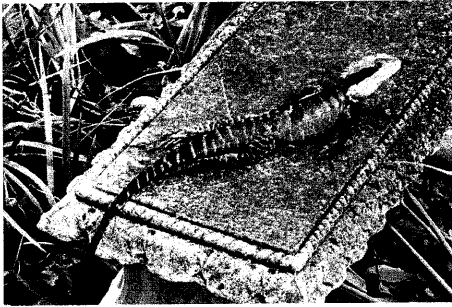
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Water dragons



Every summer for many years we have had one or two large large Eastern Water Dragons (*Physignathus lesueurii lesueurii*) wandering around the garden, visiting neighbours and swimming in the fishpond or swimming pool. We were concerned that they might drown in the pool, but then observed them climbing out easily, using suction pads on their feet.

This year a sizeable colony is resident, ranging from juveniles about 10cm long to full grown adults almost 1 metre in length, with several 'teenagers' in between, and evidence of digging for egg laying. They take little notice of us, but run off speedily on their long front legs if we invade their space. One senior adult in particular now spends most of the day sunbaking beside the fishpond on a garden seat (see photo), with an occasional swim to cool off.

Why this year is particularly favourable for them is a mystery. Perhaps the reduction in kookaburras, or in the local cat and dog population, has been a benefit. Or perhaps their food source has improved, or the prevailing warm dry weather in December–January has suited them.

Their diet is opportunistic, including insects, frogs and fruit—and, we suspect, small goldfish! Recently while breakfasting outside we were joined by a middle-sized lizard systematically gathering grapes which currawongs had knocked to the ground. He or she was far too busy eating to be concerned by us.

It has been a privilege sharing our garden with these gentle giant lizards. We have enjoyed observing their comings and goings, and their behaviour such as head bobbing and semaphore signalling to each other. We read on the internet that short arm waving indicates submission while fast arm waves indicate dominance. Sometimes when disturbed they dive into the pond and remain submerged for a long time, allegedly (according to the internet article) for up to 90 minutes. I hope that other residents are also enjoying their visits.

I vote 2010 as the Year of the Water Dragon in Castlecrag.

Margaret Chambers

Uniting Church, Castlecrag



MEDITATION a way of life

The Uniting Church in Charles Street is open every Friday morning at 9.15 for meditation. It is our desire to provide a place where people can learn the art of meditation and the weekly meeting provides a source of encouragement and support.

To learn to meditate all you have to do is to sit down, close your eyes and remain silent for the next 30 minutes. It sounds simple, but it is not easy and requires practice.

Meditation is more a discipline than a technique. While many books have been written about its benefits—improved sleeping, lower heart rate, better concentration, less anxiety—it is best to come to our sessions with no expectations. It is a universal practice and an integral part of all the great religions of the world. It is as natural as eating, breathing and sleeping.

We look forward to your taking advantage of our facility in the near future.

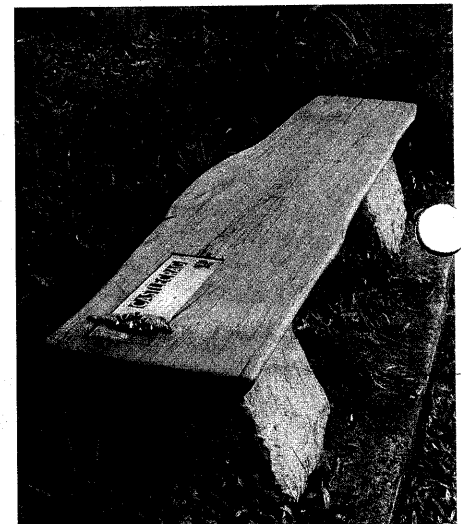
John Graham

Joyce Batterham remembered



Further to the report in *The Crag* 173 (p. 7), Council workers installed the bench seat in the island at the corner of The Parapet and Edinburgh Road in February 2010. The stonemason, Tony Hamilton, prepared a fine two metre long plank of blackbutt for the bench with the plaque to Joyce Batterham recessed into the timber. This was installed on stone supports beside the new path during February. A list of suitable plants for the main island has been provided to Chris Williams of Council's Open Space Department and he is sourcing these for planting during the autumn.

Bob McKillop



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Council News

Expanding public transport in Willoughby City

Willoughby City Council introduced the Artarmon Loop bus service in May 2009 to provide a free public transport service for employees and businesses in the Artarmon industrial area. Two leased buses operate a fixed loop service from St Leonards Station through the industrial area on a regular timetable.

The core aim of the service is to encourage use of public transport and reduce car usage by providing a sustainable transport solution for workers and businesses while also enhancing the viability of the Artarmon business district. Use of the Artarmon Loop bus service has been very encouraging with some 4500 passengers using the service each week. Accordingly, Council expanded the route during February 2010 to service Artarmon shops between 10am and 2pm using 25-seater mini-buses during this period.

In addition, Council has the opportunity to use one of the existing loop buses to provide an off-peak service to other areas of the Willoughby local government area. This would provide an excellent opportunity to test the demand of a shuttle service in areas

that are poorly serviced by public transport. Council has circulated a proposal for a trial loop service between 10am and 6pm, Monday to Friday, servicing the following areas for one day of each week:

- Castle Cove to Chatswood including stops at the new Castle Cove Library and community centre;
- Middle Cove to Chatswood;
- Castlecrag to Chatswood;
- Northbridge to and from Northbridge Plaza (including the new Northbridge Library); and
- West Chatswood to Chatswood (eventually to incorporate the St Peters Green facility once opened).

The community is invited to join in the on-line discussion and suggest areas which might benefit from the shuttle service, whether they would use the service, where potential users might catch the bus and which day of the week would suit for travel to and from each area. The on-line discussion forum, 'Bang The Table', is accessible from Willoughby City Council's Have Your Say section of the homepage at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au

For more information phone Willoughby City Council on 9777 1000.

Eugenia O'Brien

Forthcoming tours and workshops

Willoughby City Council offers an interesting range of tours and workshops for residents of all ages and readers are encouraged to check these out on the website at: www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au click 'Events' and then 'Diary Dates'. The

following is a summary of forthcoming events that may interest readers (see website for further details):

Workshop:

Habitat Landscaping

Small Birds; Saturday 20 March, 9am-1pm
Learn how to create safe havens for wrens, finches and other small insectivorous birds. This workshop will include information on the use of plants and a practical session constructing shelters.

- Free, but booking essential by 11 March: Habitat Restoration Officer on 9777 7871 or email@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Workshop:

'Harness the sun! Solar PV it's Easy'

Wednesday 7 April, 6:30pm-7:30pm.

Presented by expert consultants this workshop cuts through the red tape and runs participants through the solar process including purchasing, installation, rebates and development applications (if required). Willoughby residents will also share their experiences in going solar.

- Free, but booking essential by 1 April: Assistant Sustainability Education Co-ordinator on 9777 7674 or email@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Tour:

'Follow your Recycling'

Monday 12 April, 8:30am-12:30pm

Meet at Chatswood, to catch a bus to Chullora Materials Recycling Facility and discover what happens to the recycling you leave out for collection each week.


- Free, but booking essential by 6 April: Waste Education Officer on 9777 767730 or email@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

WELCOME TO THE CONCOURSE

The Concourse is the new name for Chatswood's Civic Place development. When it opens in late 2011, it will be a new cultural home for the local community and beyond.

An initiative of Willoughby City Council, The Concourse will be yours to explore and enjoy.

To find out how you can get involved visit theconcourse.com.au




Community Notice Board

Community Organisations

Castlecrag Progress Association:

'Representing the Castlecrag Community'

General Meeting: Tuesday 23 March 2010 at 7.30pm, with Nick Tobin, Council's General Manager delivering a 3-D pictorial presentation of The Concourse (see page 6).

All welcome. Further information: info@castlecrag.org.au

Castlecrag Community Library: Support your local library. Opening hours: Tuesday 3–4.30pm; Thursday 2–5pm; Saturday 10am–12noon. Phone: 9958 8395.

Castlecrag Conservation Society: The next meeting will be held on 25 March at 8pm at the Castlecrag Community Centre. The DVD *Rainforest: The Secret of Life* will be shown. Information: Harold Spies 9958 8569

Walter Burley Griffin Society: Tour of the *Stella James House*, Avalon. A Heritage Festival 2010 event on Sunday 18 April in conjunction with the Mona Vale Library. Parking is only available at the meeting site, from where a walk will depart at 10.15am to transverse the bushland to the Walter Burley Griffin-designed house built in 1934. Guided tours will be conducted through the house for small groups. There is no wheelchair access. Cost: \$15 for WBGs members and \$20 non-members. Bookings essential on 9970 1600: the meeting venue will be provided on booking. For information on the Society, check: www.griffinsociety.org

Other Events / Notices

Willoughby Environmental Protection Association (WEPA):

The AGM will be held on Tuesday 16 March at 8pm, at the Artatmon Library. Andy Burton will speak on 'Bugs & Beasies in your Backyard'. See <http://wepa.org.au/> for information.

Sydney Opera Society: Saturday 10 April, Murray Dahn on Verdi's *La Sanquilla del West*. Also Saturday 1 May for a Concert by the Conservatorium Opera students' choir. Venue: the Presbyterian Church Hall, Cnr Laurel and High Streets. Further information: Shirley Robertson 9605 5851.

Willoughby District Historical Society Inc: *Notables who Shaped Willoughby*, a special 2010 Heritage Festival event featuring displays of the local industrialists, architects and business people who helped 'shape the nation', including Walter and Marion Griffin and their internationally-recognised urban landscape design for Castlecrag. At the museum, *Boronia*, 58 Johnson Street Chatswood. Open on Sundays 11 & 18 April, 1.30–4pm; Thursdays 15 & 23 April, 10am–1pm: entry by donation to support the museum's operations. For further information phone 9410 3203.

'Pub Tales' tour—18 April: This tour, organised by Willoughby City Council, will visit three heritage pubs to hear locals bring Willoughby's history to life with tales of Henry Lawson, sporting legends and TV personalities. Bus leaves Dougherty Community Centre, 7 Victor Street at 1.30pm, returning at 5pm approximately. Free, but bookings essential: 9777 7976.

Willoughby City Heritage Awards Presentation—21 April:

The Willoughby Heritage Awards recognise excellence in design and promote sustainable design solutions that maintain and enhance the significant heritage character of Willoughby. Time of presentation: 6pm; free but bookings essential: 9777 7976. Short-listed entrants will be on display at Willoughby City Council, 31 Victor Street, 3 April–5 May.

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

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