

Hands up to help the Haven

The redesign of our precious Haven Amphitheatre remains of primary importance in the community. One thing is blatantly clear – everyone wants to see the Haven re-opened as quickly as possible. Both the President and Mayor's reports refer to the latest developments and design proposal which all community groups have now agreed upon and has gained overwhelming support on the council's "Have Your Say" process. There have been some compromises but the general feeling is that the design now meets the heritage, environmental and functional requirements necessary for operating as an open-air performance space in the beautiful bushland valley of the Castlehaven Reserve.

As Mayor Gail points out, once the design has been finalised, the next issue is how is it to be funded? Council has committed \$150,000 which is understood to cover preparation of DA and other preparatory work. They have made it clear that they are unwilling to contribute any further funding. There are state and federal government cultural grants that can be applied for, but we as a community will need to stand up to ensure that our only remaining community space can live again. WCC is pursuing arrangements for donations to the building fund to be tax deductible. When this agreement with the ATO is secured, please dig deep!

Council amalgamations are looking us in the face. Whilst WCC has agreed to a proposed merger, our chosen partner, North Sydney is not at all willing and is threatening to take legal action if they are forced to join



Cajoning at the Haven Spring Festival, 2010 Photo: Josh Jenkins

us. There is increasing concern that the modeling adopted by KPMG, commissioned by the NSW Government to provide a rigorous analysis, has huge flaws in their assumptions and costings. The government is refusing to release reports analysing the costs and impacts of these forced amalgamations.

Last issue we ran a piece encouraging residents to "Improve your life: volunteer at Oriel Reserve." Rob Gibson, WCC's bushcare trainer gave compelling reasons as to how being a part of a bushcare team can improve your well-being. Unfortunately, no-one responded, and as a result this team has had to be abandoned. It is a great shame as there was a small group of committed weeders who have been getting down and dirty for the last decade. They have made a huge difference to this delightful reserve.

Many houses border the Oriel and it is very disappointing that none of these residents can spare 3hrs a month to help.

This community was built on volunteer work, from the early days of raising funds for a community centre (now primarily the pre-school and library) to the various local groups who work tirelessly for our common good today. Bushcare is a wonderful way to meet neighbours and learn new skills (what weed is that?) and it is very satisfying to watch a site transform back to its native state.

It's not too late! If some new people come forward, Council will reinstate the group. Thank you to all those who have worked on the Oriel, and all the other bushcare sites in Castlecrag over the years. Your contribution is both visible and highly valued.

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NOTICE OF CPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday March 16, 2016

8.00pm

GUEST SPEAKER:

Philip Thalís

Director, HILL THALIS Architecture + Urban Projects PL

Co-Author with Peter Cantril *Public Sydney; Drawing the City*

PLANNING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST – finding a balance

In the Marion Mahony Hall, Glenaeon School

117 Edinburgh Rd, Castlecrag

All welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

THINK LOCALLY!

SHOP LOCALLY!

EMPLOY LOCALLY!

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

PO Box 4259 Castlecrag NSW 2068

web page: www.castlecrag.org.au

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

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

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Vice President Dr John Steel
Secretary Dr Paul Stokes
Treasurer Diana Jones
Committee Ruth Kendon, Gay Spies OAM
Editors Lindy Batterham, Sandra Odorisio

Write to us

The Crag is a community newsletter and we welcome letters and contributions from residents about local issues. We do not publish anonymous letters. Items should be sent to the editors by email to: editors@castlecrag.org.au

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Disclaimer

The CPA and The Crag is not responsible for information or advice in contributed articles or letters. Readers should seek their own personal, professional advice.

From the Editors

Firstly we would like to thank Council for their commitment to facilitating the rebuilding of the Haven stage and giving the community an opportunity to "Have their say". They have been patient with us as we have pursued consensus.

The amalgamation of Willoughby Council with North Sydney Council should be challenged, as we discover that the 2 million dollars in savings that was to be delivered by this process is being questioned.

release the KPMG's documents on the matter? We admire North Sydney Council for taking up the challenge. Arranged marriages are not part of the Australian culture and one would have to ask, if we have issues of being over-governed, maybe it is the role of State government that should be put into question, rather than the local government, which is closest to the people!

This issue pays honor to one of our late Elders Annette Robinson, who was born here in 1929. She was Marion Mahony's 'moon child' and her obituary beautifully reflects a story of the history of our suburb. All too often we discover the incredible stories of people after they have passed.

Editors

THE CRAG Mayor's Column



It has been a busy start to 2016, with Council working to deliver many important projects and initiatives. It's also been great to see many of you at recent community events, including Australia Day.

Council is seeking your feedback on a preferred design option for a new stage at the Haven Amphitheatre. The plans and further information can be viewed at www.haveyoursaywilloughby.com.au, with submissions closing on Friday 26 February.

Another hot topic is Council amalgamations. Since my last update, the State Government formally proposed a merger between Willoughby and North Sydney Councils and is now holding a public inquiry, led by independent Delegate, Ian Reynolds, into this proposal.

You can submit your feedback until 5pm on Sunday 28 February at www.councilboundaryreview.nsw.gov.au or by mailing: Council Boundary Review Submissions, GPO Box 5341, Sydney NSW 2001.

I encourage everyone to have your say about the proposed amalgamation. This is an important process which could shape the future for our communities and I want to ensure the Delegate has a clear understanding of our community's thoughts, needs and concerns.

Council will prepare its own written submission as part of the inquiry, which will be the subject of a report to Council in February. Further details on the timeline from this point on can be found on Council's website.

If you have any issues you would like to discuss with me please phone 9777 1001 or alternatively send me an email at gail.giles-gidney@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Gail Giles-Gidney

Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. Membership Form

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From the President

Happy New Year to one and all.

The Castlecrag Progress Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on 16 March at the Glenaeon Hall and we would like to invite all residents of Castlecrag to come along. We are lucky enough to have Philip Thalys, a prominent architect, as our speaker for the evening. He will be talking about the many planning issues that communities face.

Philip's talk will focus on the tension between the pressures of development and the wider public interest and the need to find an appropriate balance; a matter of importance not only for Castlecrag but for the wider community of the State as a whole, particularly given that our State Government seems to have adopted a pro-development stance.

We are also faced with a number of other critical issues. The State Government appears determined to force amalgamations of local councils. It is also making changes to NSW biodiversity and conservations laws, changes to the management of strata schemes that dilute owner's rights and the sale of government assets which we believe could be detrimental to NSW residents. All of these are on top of the damage that has already been done by the 10/50 clearing legislation.

The CPA committee works hard to ensure our natural and built heritage is protected. On Monday 1st February I attended a meeting about the State Government's proposal to weaken laws protecting the natural environment across NSW. These changes risk a return to wholesale clearing of trees across the state which, if allowed, would result in a significant loss of wildlife habitat and an increase in the already rapid decline of biodiversity. We must act on this as a matter of urgency.

The CPA takes an active role in trying to preserve the unique character of our suburb by monitoring Development Applications that are put to Council and providing appropriate comment back to Council. We are very fortunate to have the assistance of a local architect, Ben Gerstel

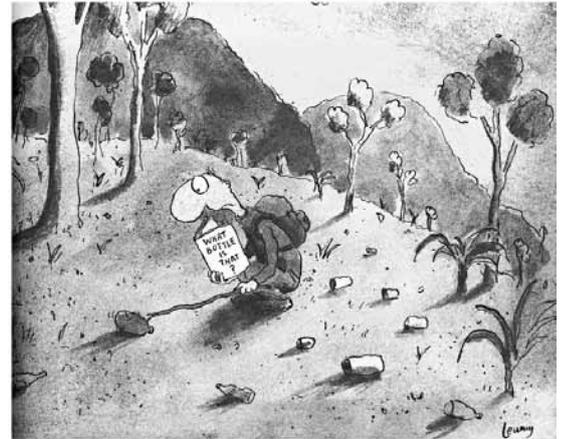
(long time resident of Castlecrag), who provides us with invaluable support in this endeavour. If you have a concern about a development proposal please contact us so Ben can check it out.

The CPA has a keen interest in the future of the Haven Amphitheatre. As you will be aware Council has notified all residents about the preferred design option for the renewal of the stage. The CPA, originally proposed a refurbishment of the stage rather than replacing it with a new stage. However we now support the Council's Option 1A, along with the other local organisations, including the Haven Amphitheatre Committee, the Friends of The Haven, Castlecrag Conservation Society and Willoughby Environmental Protection Association. All residents are urged to visit the Council website to "Have Your Say". Alternatively you can write a letter. Comments close on Friday 26 February, 2016.

With regard to Council amalgamations, the CPA is making a submission to the Boundaries Commission on the subject. We strongly oppose forced amalgamation (along with the vast majority of local Councils throughout NSW) and the evidence of similar amalgamations in Queensland and Victoria suggest that there is no financial, or indeed any other advantage from this. You can see our submission on the CPA website. Our concerns range from the real possibility of less community representation in Council decisions to the prospect of the wholesale selling off of public assets. This affects us all profoundly and I urge all residents to respond. Submissions close on 28 February. See Mayor's report for details of where to send your letter.

There has never been a more important time for you to become actively involved in your community. We invite all residents to join the Progress Association so that you can put forward your ideas and raise the issues you feel are important and need action.

Kate Westoby



What Bottle is That,
with thanks to Mr Leunig

Letter to the Editor

Monday night (8 February) saw another nail in the coffin of democracy, with the majority of Willoughby Councillors voting to abolish two important Standing committees, the Transport, Access and Environment Committee and the Cultural and Civic Committee.

Both Committees, held in the Banksia Room, were noted for their relaxed and informal atmosphere. The Committees will be replaced with two General Manager's Briefings, which are closed to the general public, thus an individual's voice will be restricted to three minutes at Council meetings.

It is ironic that whilst the majority of residents oppose the amalgamation of Councils, based on loss of representation, Willoughby City Council has voted to reduce the community's access. A decision to dissolve ten other committees has been deferred.

As the line in the popular tune *Big Yellow Taxi* goes: "Don't it always go to show, that you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone".

Yours faithfully,
Ted Wilson

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Obituary – Annette Robertson 24 September 1929–18 December 2015



Annette Robertson lived in Castlecrag for the first 8 years of her life. Her first home was a tent, pitched on land her parents bought in Sunnyside Crescent. That tent was replaced by a more permanent home, aptly named: "The Kingdom of Love", and soon shortened to "The Kol". It still stands today. There was not another house within half a kilometre, which made for plenty of space for a couple of horses and some cows.

Annette was never lonely, as The Kol was always filled with children. This was because her mother, Dorothy Trinick, a qualified teacher, gained permission from the Education Department to start a school, which she called "Ivanhoe". Annette and her fellow classmates benefited from Dorothy's unconventional approach to education (an approach endorsed by Marion Mahony Griffin who was a frequent visitor to the school). Dot's curriculum included such activities as riding the family horses, milking the family cows, dancing Madame Bodenwieser style, and participating in Greek plays.

These plays were generally directed by Marion Mahony Griffin, and they were attended by the whole community, many of whom were also participants. Plays were performed in the area now known as the Haven Amphitheatre. Annette would say that the plays involved groups of children "swathed in white sheets, running hither and thither through the bush". There was no formal stage, no lighting, no standstone steps – just the natural outcropping rocks, grasses and trees.

The Castlecrag children had what Annette described as an "idyllic" upbringing. It was a small, tight-knit community and the freedom the children felt to roam the spurs and gullies of Castlecrag belonged to a time when the Castlecrag residents were all on first name basis; a time before

the Harbour Bridge was built, when only dirt tracks threaded their way along the contours of the land; a time before television, when calling in on neighbours for a "cuppa", putting on a plays, musical evenings and dances, bound the small community together. Annette described the residents of Castlecrag as a "bohemian" lot: vagabonds, artists, and musicians.

An example of their unorthodox approach to life was expressed during the depression, when Annette's family and some of the other Castlecrag residents shared food and clothing vouchers with a family of conscientious objectors who lived in one of the sandstone caves near The Kol. Castlecrag was unique, partly because of the type of person attracted to live in such a stunning place, at such a time.

When Annette's parents moved out of Castlecrag to establish their newsagency in Manly, her grandparents continued to live in a small stone hut (without electricity or hot water), right on the

tip of the Castlecrag peninsula, so that Annette remained a frequent visitor to Castlecrag. The journey to Manly was often a combination of boat across Middle Harbour and then a bus; or a walk to a tram at the top of Edinburgh Road, and then a bus. Transport seldom involved a car ride, although Annette's family was one of the few who did eventually own a car.

Annette returned to live in Castlecrag when, aged 23, she married Mac Robertson. At first the young couple looked after Annette's grandparents in the small stone hut at the end of Edinburgh Road, where, over an open fire, meals were cooked and water heated. The toilet was outside the hut. During the first two years of their marriage, Annette and Mac built their own house further up Edinburgh Road, before the road dips down to the peninsula. Mac and Annette made a great team, and described themselves as "soul mates". They were to remain in Castlecrag throughout Annette's life. To her, it was a great

blessing to live in Castlecrag.

Over many decades, she and Mac made their house available to relatives, friends, and friends of friends, often on little or no notice. Annette loved sharing her love of Castlecrag with anyone and everyone.

In the early 1950s Annette and other young mothers gathered each week with their children, at the tennis courts that are still located in Cortile Reserve. Annette was to rediscover tennis



Moonchild – Annette Trinick

In about 1934, Wally Trinick took this photo of his daughter Annette, for Marion Mahony Griffin. Annette and Marion shared a keen interest in fairies, believing that they could see them here and there in Castlecrag. The photo was designed to display an airy, insubstantial quality in the child, in keeping with the name Marion gave Annette: "moonchild".

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Annette Robertson

Continued from page 4

when she retired, playing in her 60s and 70s, along with many of those who (like her) had been in that young mothers' group in the 1950s. She was one of the many people who walk and run along the streets of Castlecrag (often in the very early morning), keeping fit or simply enjoying the benefits of living in a place so beautiful. Annette loved the fact that Castlecrag is so close to Sydney CBD, yet a world away from the city: surrounded by water, its gullies of trees filled with birdsong morning and evening.

Over the course of her life, Annette contributed her time generously to many and varied not-for-profit organisations. Her volunteering included Alcoholics Anonymous and Rotary, and she acted as an art guide in the SH Ervin Gallery on Observatory Hill (in the same building that once housed her old school, Fort Street Girls High). She enjoyed playing bowls at Northbridge Bowling Club. She was an active member of the Castlecrag and Northbridge Uniting Church. She was clever, kind and generous, and those who knew her well were aware of her quiet, dry sense of humour. She was loved by many, and was an inspiration to her very dear husband, her three children, her three grandchildren, and her 10 great grandchildren.

She will be greatly missed.

**Fiona Burman
and Mac Robertson**

CASTLECRAG NOTES...

Haven Committee (HAC) Report:

Carols by Candlelight 2015 at the Haven Amphitheatre featured Michael Tyack on keyboard, Graham Jesse on Sax and flute and vocalists Linda Hale, Alison Thomas and Marlene Vaughan.

The performers, perched precariously on a miniscule, makeshift stage on the North Eastern side of the valley as water from a burst main on The Scarp pooled around their feet. This, however, did not mar the performance nor dampen the crowd's enthusiasm.

Around 400 people attended the event and sang along with the performers. Santa Claus arrived to distribute candy canes to all the children, only to find that the Haven stage is still off limits two years in a row and he wondered when it may be reinstated so that he can dance on it along with all the children in the audience. Things have not moved quickly on the rebuild of the Amphitheatre stage and one hopes that now that there is consensus from all the local community groups on a design, that the project will move swiftly to a DA and that the rebuild can be effected as soon as possible.

Marlene Vaughan

Imagining the Haven Arts project

For the last few months I've been filming for a Council funded digital media arts project recording interviews with locals about their memories of and connection to The Haven. Thanks to everyone who has been involved so far.

Through the interviews, I've come to understand many of the different ways that people interact with The Haven, from its annual Christmas Carol celebration, street parties, memories of performing there and building the facilities to appreciating the space as a natural resource.

Some people emphasise their personal connections, some its historic significance or its environmental value and others its importance in cultural and social life.

The interviews will be edited with photos and other footage into a series of short films for exhibition online and in Council art spaces. Filming for the project has also provided the opportunity to capture recollections and thoughts about other aspects of The Crag's history.

I'd love to hear from anyone who might be interested in learning more about the projects or in being interviewed or sharing old photos or film footage of The Haven or of life in Castlecrag.

Please contact me via the project email address, imaginingthehaven@gmail.com.

Kay Donovan

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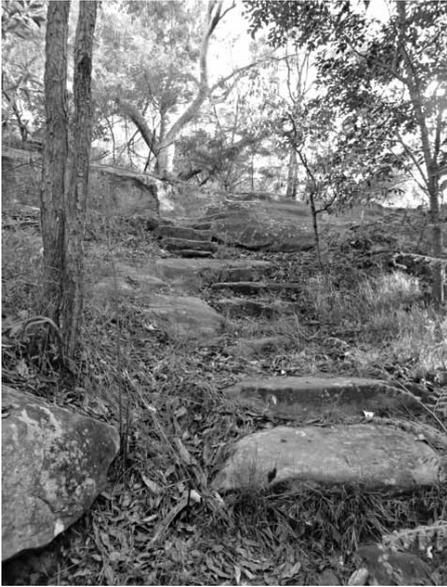
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That's a RAP – the Northern Escarpment Reserve Action Plan



Stairs leading up to the flat rock, Sunnyside Crescent. Photo: Lindy Batterham

The Castlecrag Northern Escarpment is a large 23.3ha bushland reserve that rises majestically from Sugarloaf Bay in Middle Harbour. It features a wide range of habitats including large trees with hollows, rock overhangs and outcrops, and estuarine areas with mangroves that are home to many wildlife species including Swamp Wallabies, Lyre Birds, and Lace Monitors. The mangrove flats provide shelter and food for migratory birds and breeding areas for marine species.

This description comes from the report recently written by Council Officers. WCC has been developing a reserve action plan (RAP) for the Northern Escarpment for quite some time. It recently sought feedback on the Plan through its 'Have your say' online comment section of their website. It refers to the middens and rock shelters with artworks created by the Gamaraygal people and contains information about the various plant communities, wildlife and their habitats as well as built heritage-listed sites.

The RAP includes impacts to habitat including encroachments; past achievements; and bushland management actions for the next five years. Actions

include weed management to establish a stable native plant community, preparation of areas for controlled burns, and improved access in designated locations which is great news to those of us who enjoy bushwalking and being down on the Bay.

We are indeed fortunate to still have this reserve just beyond many of our backyards. It is the result of and a wonderful example of "power of the people" because in 1948 much of the Castlecrag Northern Escarpment was designated to form part of the proposed Warringah Expressway. This was to include constructing a bridge linking Seaforth and Castlecrag with the expressway continuing and running along the northern escarpment.

A long and intense campaign led by the Progress Association over a couple of periods finally forced the abandonment of the project officially in the early 90's. We should be very proud of and grateful to our previous (and a few present) residents who lobbied and worked hard for this.

The Bushland team at WCC are to be congratulated for putting together this RAP. It is a detailed document with a well

thought through strategy for managing this precious resource in our community and is well worth a read. Look for it on the council website after the draft version is ratified by Council.

The Bushland Management Goals for the Northern Escarpment are

- To preserve and restore the vegetation and natural landforms;
- To maintain and enhance biodiversity and fauna habitat;
- To restore bushland areas that are in poor condition;
- To enhance links in landscape and habitat connectivity;
- To preserve the genetic integrity of the local landscape;
- To conserve the natural landscape values of the reserve

There is also a native plant species list for the Castlecrag Northern Escarpment in the report for those who would like to bring the bush right back into their own yards.

Devil's Cave on the Northern Escarpment
Photo: Lindy Batterham



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Meanwhile, on the Southern side of the peninsula – vegie gardens and a men's shed

Did you know there has been an organic community garden operating in Warner's Park since 2007? It has been created and maintained by an amazing assortment of people who share a love of this beautiful valley and are learning together how to grow clean, fresh organic food. With a focus on sustainability, they are reusing and recycling materials to build garden beds, make compost, plant veggies and collect their own seeds.

With the recent closure of the Warner's Park Bowling Club, Council has also been seeking feedback from residents about the future use of this valuable community asset. A consultative meeting and an open day were held late last year and a report incorporating these suggestions will shortly be delivered to Council.

Among the ideas put forward at the Open Day was for a Boules course with café, artists studios, before and after school care and vacation care (OOSHC), meeting rooms and bush regeneration/permaculture classes. The Men's shed from Northbridge are keen to relocate and run a community repair shed. Great idea! Presently, the former women's clubhouse is being used for playgroups, yoga, before and after school care and vacation care (OOSHC), as well as council-run workshops on topics like "gardening in small spaces". A popular suggestion has



Castlecrag resident Mary Anne harvesting beetroot

been to incorporate complimentary multi-use of the building by community and school/pre-school groups and those with a focus on expanding on the environmental education and sustainability activities already in progress. One of the restraints on the site however, is access. The Outpost is just that! The only way in for vehicles is a narrow road ending in the valley with limited parking.

The Dairy Community Garden welcomes all beginner and keen gardeners to this lovely site in the valley between the Crag and Northbridge. Easy walking access is available down the bush track from The Rampart and up along the creek to the grounds in front of the old womens bowling club.

There are lots of easy jobs such as watering to weeding and harvesting. Abundant tomatoes, fennel, oregano and spinach are all ready to be picked. Planning for next season is underway so you could join in and make suggestions of what to grow. New built up water-wise wick beds save your back and are full of produce.

Council is considering a number of options including an application from Permaculture North to take over the club and use it as a huge demo garden. This would be an amazing site for everyone to come to.

Mini meets are held every Wednesday from 9-10.30am and the 1st Sat/3rd Sunday of the month.

Go down, have a look and get involved! You won't be disappointed.

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The Houses of Castlecrag

An interesting house in Edingurgh Road is visited by Ben Gerstel. Ben is a local architect and volunteer guide for the Australian Architectural Association (www.architecture.org.au).

192 Edinburch Road, Castlecrag

The house at 192 Edinburch Road could be described as a landmark house because of its position on Edinburch Road (one of the highest points in Castlecrag) and its rectilinear appearance.

The architect actually called the house, "The Grand Piano of Castlecrag". He curved one side of the house like a grand piano. This curve reflected the western curved boundary line. He elevated the house on steel posts like the legs of a grand piano.

When the house was finished, a passer-by could look through the open area around the ground floor steel posts to the backyard. The entry walls were grey concrete bricks and on the first floor terrace was a concrete besser block screen (concrete blocks with holes in them now coming back into vogue). These blocks were designed in groups of four to make up a pattern. They provided a contrast to the smooth white surface of the walls of the house.

The house was renovated in 2007 and the besser block screen was replaced with aluminium louvres. Other original features may also have been lost in the renovation and over time. Unfortunately "the piano curve" is hidden from street view by the neighbouring house and a hedge.

The house was designed by Theodore Fry in the late 1950's for his family and was featured in the magazine, *Australian House and Garden* in 1961. It is one of two houses that Fry designed in Castlecrag. The other house is in the Bulwark.

The turning point in the history of architecture was the advent of the Modern Movement in the 1920's. This movement followed the phrase, 'Form

follows function'. This period of architecture developed at a design school in Dessau, Germany called the Bauhaus. All facets of design were reinvented in this school.

This period of architecture was also termed the "International Style" because it occurred all around the world.

The Fry House incorporated design characteristics from this period. This included elevating the house above ground, a flat, butterfly roof (a 'V' shaped roof with a box gutter in the middle), horizontal steel balustrades, a white exterior and the façade design... The internal walls of the house had a textured wall finish.

One of the Bauhaus principles following its dictum of Form follows Function, was for the window design in the façade of a building to provide the decoration for the building. The windows reflected the function of the room inside the building by way of the size and placement of the windows. Living rooms had large areas of glass whilst bedrooms and bathrooms had smaller areas of glass. For houses, this was modified if a view could be seen from the room. This principle can be seen in the Fry House. There was no other superfluous decoration applied to the building façade.

Another important design element of the Bauhaus was the inside of buildings became more wall and column free through the advent of new materials like steel and concrete.



Photo: B. Gerstel

Theodore Fry or Teodore Frewillig was Polish and came to Australia in 1948. He was born in 1908 and died in 1959. Fry also completed numerous, multi-storey flats in the eastern suburbs and the design for the Polish Club in Ashfield. He also entered in the design competition for the new offices for Waverley Council.

Following his death, his practice was taken over by another immigrant architect, Nino Sydney. I was lucky enough to track Nino down and spent some time with him talking about Theodore Fry.

There is a growing awareness of Australian domestic architecture from the 1950's and 60's. As more of these houses are being sold, it is important that new owners appreciate the history of the original house. Houses can be modified to suit modern lifestyles but the integrity of the original house should be left to preserve its place in Australian domestic architecture.

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Heritage Festival events in Castlecrag

To celebrate the National Trust's Heritage Festival and its 2016 theme of 'Discovery and Rediscovery', the Walter Burley Griffin Society is organising two events on Saturday, 16 April 2016.

1. Rediscovering the Griffins' Castlecrag – guided walk

The internationally renowned suburb of Castlecrag was designed by Walter Burley Griffin in the 1920s as a residential community inspired by the ecological and aesthetic qualities of the landscape of Middle Harbour and its foreshores.

You are invited to take a guided tour past Griffin houses and through some of the reserves and walkways at Castlecrag and learn about their history and the special community that the Griffins fostered at Castlecrag.

Please bring hat, walking shoes and water.

When: Saturday 16 April, 10.00am to 12.30pm

Cost: Adults \$20; Children \$10; Family \$50; Concession \$15
Members (Walter Burley Griffin Society & National Trust) \$15

Bookings essential:

Email: info@griffinsociety.org

Online: <http://www.trybooking.com/JZGG>

The meeting place for the walk will be given on booking.

Castlecrag residents enjoying an al fresco afternoon tea near 'The Pinnacle', Edinburgh Road. Photographer: Hermann Junge, early 1930s, courtesy Linden Junge.



2. Rediscovering the Griffins' Castlecrag: the people and places in the 1930s and 40s

A panel of former residents will discuss living in Castlecrag in the early years of the Griffin-inspired community, covering aspects including how the community evolved, children's play, the landscape, memorable personalities, stories about the Griffins, knitlock, public transport; cars, houses, shops, army camps, street tree plantings. To accompany the discussion there will also be a slide show of photographs from the 1920s and 30s from a recently-discovered collection. Light refreshments provided.

Where: Marion Mahony Griffin Hall, Glенаeon Infants School, 121 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag

When: Saturday 16 April, 2.30pm to 4pm

Cost: Adults \$20; Children \$10; Family \$50; Concession \$15
Members (Walter Burley Griffin Society & National Trust) \$15

Come to this event and also to the walk in the morning to enjoy a \$5 discount.

Bookings essential:

Email: info@griffinsociety.org

Online: <http://www.trybooking.com/JZGG>

Further information: 9958 4516

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Need a JP and can't find one?

You don't often need a Justice of the Peace, but when you do, where do you go?

In the past it may have been the local Pharmacy or the Post Office, but these days fewer Pharmacists are JP's, while Post Offices have become very busy and the long queue may not deliver a JP at the end of it. Fortunately Castlecrag Post office has a full service and a JP in residence when John is at the counter.

Another option is to find your closest JP Community Desk.

In our case, that means the Northbridge or Chatswood libraries.

Both operate regular weekly services where a JP is in residence ready to help.

Northbridge Library

258 Sailors Bay Rd
Every Thursday night from 6-8pm
Geoff West JP
Northbridge Community Desk
Coordinator 9967 3262

Chatswood Library

The Concourse
Every Wednesday and Saturday
from 10-12 noon.
Ida Luke JP
Chatswood Community Desk
Coordinator 9777 7900

A Justice of the Peace for NSW is an ordinary person. An Australian citizen, at least 18 years old, who must be of good character and is nominated for appointment by a member of the NSW parliament. He or she is appointed for a 5 year term by the Attorney General.

They are volunteers who do not get paid for their services.

If you don't live locally you can find a list of JP community desks across NSW on the public register at www.jp.nsw.gov.au.

Thank you, to Geoff West JP, for his help in preparing this item.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS • environment news •



Beware of ticks, there are plenty about.

Castlecrag resident, Paul Stokes, was quietly doing the crossword on

his Edinburgh Rd balcony last month when a tick managed to find him and lodge itself into Paul's back. Such are the perils of living in a beautiful bush suburb! Partner (and Editor) Lindy Batterham thought it was a mole until she noticed it move and immediately leapt into action with *Lyclear* cream as the tick was determinedly burrowing in.

This is shaping up to be a particularly bad year for bush ticks. Having received information from the local doctors that they are seeing an increase in "victims", we have decided to set up a local TICK REGISTER. If you have been bitten please let us know at editors@castlecrag.org.au when and where you think it latched on to you.

As there has been some new information on how best to deal with them, we thought we'd share these details from the Willoughby Council's Bushland group.

If you have been bitten by an adult tick the experts now say it is preferable to kill the tick where it is attached and wait for it to drop off. Household tweezers are no longer recommended, instead they suggest spraying with an ether-containing spray like *Wart Off Freeze* or *Wartner*. There are specially designed tick-tweezers with a hook used by doctors and available at some pharmacies, but these are only effective if you are expert in the twisting technique required to extricate a tick. If that doesn't work your best response should be to present to your local GP for expert care.

If you are bitten by a tick in either the larval or nymph stage you should simply apply Permethrin *Lyclear* cream as this suffocates the nymph.

Scratching is dangerous as it can spread the toxins more quickly.

Prevention is always better than cure when it comes to ticks, so to avoid them

altogether it is recommended you:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when walking or working in areas where ticks occur.
- Tuck pants into socks to minimize skin access.
- Wear a broad brimmed hat to keep hair contained.
- Use insect repellent, particularly those containing DEET such as *RID*, *Tropical RID*, *Tropical Aerogard*, *Bushmans* or *Picardin OFF!*
- Wear light-coloured clothing which makes it easier to see ticks.
- Check for the presence of ticks after possible exposure, especially on the neck and scalp.
- Place work clothes in a hot drier for 20 minutes to kill any ticks present.
- Pet owners are also reporting considerable success with the use of battery operated repellent collars.

As for Paul, his tick extraction did not go smoothly at all. He suffered severe flu like symptoms for nearly a week and broke out in a blotchy red rash across his entire body as the wound became ulcerated. Four weeks on, after two series of antibiotic treatments, the ulcer is finally starting to heal up.

A tick specialist at Syd Uni is asking for dead ticks to be sent to him, as part of a research project. Wildlife Officer at WCC Simon Brown has more info on this if you want to pursue it.

Highlights of the summer 2015 survey of birds in City of Willoughby LGA

A survey of birds in the Willoughby LGA was undertaken by Dr Andrew Huggett of InSight Ecology in December 2015. A total of 25 sites in bushland reserves, parks, road reserves and a cemetery were surveyed during the early mornings, late afternoons and nights.

The following bird species are some highlights of the survey. A detailed report is being prepared for Council.



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Powerful Owl (threatened): a total of 7 adult and immature, Harold Reid Reserve, Ferndale Park, Mowbray Park and Blue Gum Reserve.

Australian Owlet-nightjar: Recorded in Explosives Reserve – This species was last recorded in Willoughby LGA at Ferndale Park in 2000 (Biosphere P/L 2001) and then only from before 1930 (Burton 2000).

Striated Heron: Chatswood Golf Course

White-bellied Sea-Eagle: Castlecrag Northern Escarpment.

Peregrine Falcon: Clive Park.

Superb Lyrebird: Tunks Park, Explosives Reserve and Castlecrag Northern Escarpment.

Emerald Dove: A rare visitor, Blue Gum Reserve.

Striated Pardalote: A tiny canopy insectivore, detected in North Arm Reserve and Mowbray Park. Burton (2000) described this species as a rare visitor to the LGA.

Red-browed Finch: Once common throughout Sydney. Northbridge Golf Course, Mowbray Park and Castlecrag Northern Escarpment

Eastern Yellow Robin: Breeding at several Middle Harbour bushland reserves. This species has disappeared from smaller remnants along Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River.

Mangrove Gerygone: Harold Reid Reserve.



Rufous Fantail

Photo:
Chris Charles,
Blue Gum
Reserve

Striated Thornbill: HD Robb Reserve and Mowbray Park

Variiegated Fairy-wren: Breeding in most Middle Harbour and Lane Cove reserves during the survey.

Bell Miner: A recent arrival in the LGA – a group was recorded foraging along Lane Cove River at Mowbray Park during the survey.

Brown-headed Honeyeater: North Arm Reserve.

Rufous Fantail: A summer breeding small migratory flycatcher in moist gullies in Explosives Reserve, Sugarloaf Creek, Blue Gum Reserve & Artarmon Reserve.

Thanks to Simon Brown, Wildlife Officer WCC, for condensing this report

CASTLECRAG BUSHCARE – MEETING DATES

First Monday of the Month

- **Tower Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact Jocelyn Chey 9967 5136
or Lisa Clarke 0404 806 406

First Sunday of the Month

- **Cortile Park Care**
8.30-11.30
Contact Sue Burk 0404 470 443
- **Edinburgh Rd 209**
9-12noon
Contact Keith Ferguson
0408 518 509

Second Saturday of the Month

- **Gargoyle Bushcare**
9-12noon
Contact Cherrie Wilson
0478 181 182

Second Sunday of the Month

- **Retreat Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact Lorraine Cairnes 9958 1213
or Jill Newton 9967 4933
- **Keep Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact Matthew Keighery
0408 203 511
- **Casement Reserve**
8.30-11.30
Contact Sue Burk 0404 470 443
- **Torquay Estate**
9-12noon
Contact Jo Nolan 0419 234 235



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Clean Up Australia Day

Sunday, 6 March 2016

This your chance to make a difference! Join the thousands of volunteers who come out each year to clean up their patch. To find a site near you, go to the www.cleanupaustaliaday.org.au

Yoga and Meditation in the Bush

Tuesday, 8 March 10:00am–12:00pm

Clive Park, Enter from the end of Sailors Bay Road, Northbridge
Join yoga teacher Penny Kidd for a gentle yoga and meditation session in the beautiful bushland overlooking Middle Harbour. Please bring a yoga mat or picnic blanket. A light morning tea will be provided and a short walk to follow. Bookings essential. Contact: Emma Hayes on 9777 7755 or email Emma.Hayes@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au.

Cost: Free

Willoughby Library Book Sale

Thursday, 17 March 2016 11:00am–2:00pm

The library book sale is held on the third Thursday of the month.

La Musique, La Musica

Saturday, 19 March 7:30pm–10:30pm

Zenith Theatre, Railway Street, Chatswood

La Musique, La Musica promises a smoldering night of French and Latin music and song with Toronto based cabaret singer Patricia O'Callaghan and French concert pianist Francois Gassion. Patricia's in-laws are long time residents of the Crag (the Burgess's) and she has performed at cabarets and Carols at the Haven. O'Callaghan and Gassion join forces to bring you an eclectic repertoire from the tangos of Piazzolla to the parlor songs of Piaf, with a dash of Leonard Cohen. This is a fundraiser for the Workshop Arts Centre, (where Patricia's mother-in-law sculpts!) and is promoted by Alliance Francaise Sydney.

Cost: \$55.00 book at Ticketek

Live Poets!

Nascent Poets has been established to provide budding poets of the Lower North Shore of Sydney a place to meet other poets, share their poetry and collaboratively publish in both print and electronic forms. Nascent Poets' PoetryCircle meets monthly (4th Tuesday at 7PM) at Chatswood for poetry readings and conversations. If you would like to join the Nascent Poets' PoetryCircle please email nascentpoets@gmail.com with your details or publish your thoughts and poems at nascentpoets.wordpress.com.

Fix It!

Sunday, 3 April 2016 10:00am–12:00pm

The Men's Shed, 296E Sailors Bay Rd, Northbridge

Do you have a broken wooden household item that needs fixing? Don't throw it out. Fix It! Learn how to fix your own things with the guidance of experienced mentors. After booking, please email through a short description of the issue and a photo so that we can prepare to help you. Contact: Leonne Donnelly on 02 9777 7607 or email Env.Educators@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Living Chemical-Free

Thursday, 7 April 2016 6:30 pm -8:30pm

Coachwood Room, Level 6, 31 Victor Street, Chatswood

Are you worried about the chemicals you ingest, inhale or absorb? Discover easy ways to reduce toxic chemicals from household plastics, the top 10 chemicals to avoid, the most and least contaminated fruit and vegetables and so much more. Contact: Tejinder Gill on 9777 7730 or email Tejinder.Gill@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Evening Spotlight Bushwalk

Friday, 8 April 2016 7:00 -8:30pm

Explosives Reserve, Cammaray Road, Castle Cove

What's that hiding in the bush? Discover our nocturnal wildlife on a fun family spotlight walk. You'll be surprised what we might see. Bring a torch. There is a steep section of steps on this bushwalk. Only suitable for school age children. Meet opposite No.42 Cammaray Road. Bookings essential. Contact: Emma Hayes on 9777 7755 or email Emma.Hayes@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Children's Yoga in the bush

Tuesday, 12 April 2016 2:00 – 3:00pm

Secret Location, Will be revealed upon booking confirmation

This class interweaves learning about our environment with yoga poses. It is based on mindfulness techniques to help children with self-confidence and relaxation. Suitable for children aged 7-12 years. Contact: Leonne Donnelly on 02 9777 7607 or email Env.Educators@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Cost: Free

Heritage Festival events in Castlecrag

Saturday 16 April

Rediscovering the Griffin's Castlecrag. See p9.

Diary Dates is a service by the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Please contact: info@castlecrag.org.au with details of forthcoming events and activities for inclusion.

Fauna Fair 2016

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