



CASTLECRAG  
PROGRESS  
ASSOCIATION

# THE CRAG

*A voice for the community since 1925*

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FEBRUARY 2018

## National Skipping Champs in the Crag

Skipping rope is not just child's play. It's an international sport and these kids are Individual Masters. *Story p5.*

## Flood at the Boatshed

Not many people can remember a high tide like this one in the bay. *Story p2.*

## Our Village of the Future

In November last year, Council held a drop-in session at The Quadrangle regarding the future of the CastleCrag village centre. Members of the CPA Committee and other community members and groups subsequently attended a briefing. During the presentation, representatives of the Council's consultants, Architectus, outlined 3 draft scenarios:

1. In this scenario, development is constrained by the existing Local Environment Plan (LEP) which enables in the order of 43 new residential apartments, a 32% increase in the commercial floor area while limiting building heights per existing controls with up to 3 storeys on the Northern side of Edinburgh Rd and 2 storeys on the Southern side. The Griffin Centre would be retained but the houses on the Northern side of Edinburgh Rd, between Raeburn and Rutland Avenues could be replaced with townhouses.
2. Under Scenario 2, redevelopment could result in around 89 new apartments and a 51% increase in the commercial floor space. This is achieved by modifying the LEP to increase the height limits on the Southern side of Edinburgh Road to 4 storeys and redeveloping the site of both the Griffin Centre and the commercial



*High tide at the boatshed – 10am, 3 January, 2018 – Photo: James Cryer*

3. Scenario 3 enables around 109 new apartments and a commercial space increase of 34%. This would require that the LEP be changed to allow for up to 5 storeys on the Southern side of Edinburgh Road, with redevelopment

office space opposite the intersection between The Postern and The Parapet. The Griffin Centre, while not having formal heritage status, as yet, falls within the Griffin Conservation Area.

of the Griffin Centre, and nearby office space would be redeveloped but a new public park would be created on the corner of Edinburgh Rd and The Postern.

Council stressed that the scenarios were for discussion purposes only and there are presently no defined solutions. A draft Local Centres Strategy, for community consultation, is flagged for mid-2018.

*... Continued on page 4*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2 From the Editors
- 3 From the President
- 4 From the Mayor
- 5 Local kids skip off to China
- 6 A Fair day after all!
- 7 Bee Inspired
- 8 Obituary: Harold Cedric Spies
- 9 Griffin Reserves Advisory Group
- 10 Houses of CastleCrag
- 11 Cortile Reserve Parkcare
- 12 Diary Dates

### NOTICE OF CPA GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 7 March 2018

8.00pm

#### Hear about the future of the our Village Centre

from Michael Neustein and Brian Elton, consultants to the Quadrangle's owner, and Ian Arnott, Planning Manager WCC

Let them know what you think!

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](http://www.castlecrag.org.au)

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[info@castlecrag.org.au](mailto:info@castlecrag.org.au)

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

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- Committee** Lindy Batterham  
Ruth Kendon  
Gay Spies OAM
- Editors** Lindy Batterham  
Sandra Odoriso

### 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](mailto:editors@castlecrag.org.au)

They should be concise (preferably less than 250 words for letters). Please include your email address or phone number as we may need to edit items to fit the space available. Editorial guidelines are on the web page.

### Advertising Enquiries

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### Design, Typesetting & Printing

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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

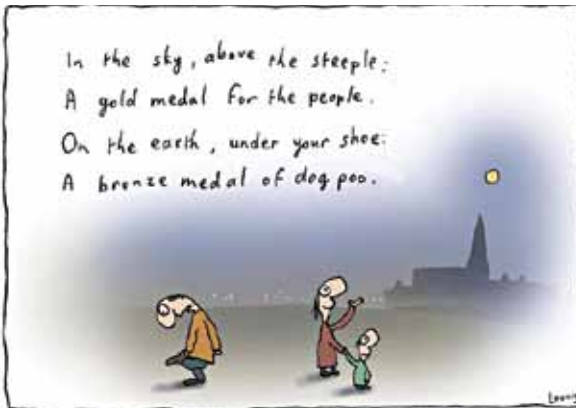
Since our last edition, matters regarding the right-turn signal have moved forward. RMS has written to the Premier announcing "the identification of the preferred option to provide the right turn..." They have also met with our Councillors and WCC staff. Their "preferred option" was described in the last issue. The signal would be provided in conjunction with a dedicated right-turn lane from Edinburgh Rd East into Eastern Valley Way and six parking spots along the Northern side of Edinburgh Rd East would be lost.

The right-turn signal is important. Pedestrian safety is crucial. Many of us must "run the gauntlet" each time we try to turn right from Edinburgh Rd. If cars are waiting to turn right from Edinburgh Rd West, it is nearly impossible to see

approaching traffic. This means that we must either take a dangerous chance or accept that only 2 cars will be able to turn each cycle. The result is long queues in Edinburgh Rd East both morning and afternoon.

Like the last time the RMS made the suggestion, word on the street is that people do not wish to lose the parking spaces because it would have substantial, detrimental effects on both the businesses there and on the amenity and village atmosphere of the precinct.

We deserve interactive and meaningful consultation with RMS. In particular, we want to know why a right-turn signal could not be provided without a dedicated right-turn lane. Many other busy intersections have such a signal without a dedicated lane. Why not here?



...with thanks Mr Leunig.

## The tide is high but I'm holding on...

During the first week of January this year, onlookers were amazed and somewhat amused, to see the normally "high and dry" Castlecrag Marina car park awash, as a rare "perigean" high tide swept across it, and lapped at the very doorways of the adjoining offices.

A perigean spring tide... is when the moon occasionally gets closer to the earth, and higher than normal high tides and lower than normal low tides will occur. *Wikipedia*

Although the tide did lap onto the boatshed office floor, there was no damage. It was a gentle reminder of the unstoppable power of Nature when she decides to put on an occasional "show of strength" to remind us who's boss! Even though these tides do happen once every few years, this one was exceptionally high. The very low tide later that afternoon was not nearly as exciting.

James Cryer

Keep *The Crag* coming to your door!

## JOIN or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP to CPA

Visit [www.castlecrag.org.au](http://www.castlecrag.org.au) or post form below

I wish to renew / apply for membership for the CPA Inc., and enclose payment of: \$20 per person \$ .....  
 (Cheque or direct debit to Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. BSB: 062 138 Account No: 10006008) \$10 per student \$ .....

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

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Queries to:  
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## From the President

It was great to see people out & about at the fair... I especially loved hearing the budding musicians play. Our second-hand books and art stalls did a roaring trade. Great for sustainability! Thank you to all those who donated books, artworks or most importantly, their time and energy on the day. In particular, a huge thank you to Simone Selby for her wonderful co-ordination of the fair. We would also like to thank Willoughby Council and the Quadrangle for their contributions. Without their help the fair would not have been possible.

We have lost one of our highly respected Elders. Harold Spies lived to the ripe old age of 97. He did much for this community, especially with his & Gay's leadership on

the Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project.

Please support the upcoming fundraiser for the rebuilding of the Haven with the wonderful Patricia O'Callahan singing Leonard Cohen. Not to be missed!

Regarding the Haven Amphitheatre, as part of the deferred DA conditions Council commissioned a Heritage Interpretation Strategy. The 80-odd page draft was delivered to community groups for comment. Once this document is finalised, all the conditions for the deferred approval of the DA should have been met.

However the Progress Association remains very concerned about the impact the access requirements will have on our little glen amphitheatre. It's a bit like tourists

loving a place to death, like Barcelona. Bringing an access walkway and platform to the western terrace largely built in the 1920's will compromise its ambience and integrity as a heritage item. Council says its hands are tied by Access regulations, but if providing equal access to everywhere destroys the site, then what's the point! Imagine ramps & lifts to the Three Sisters! It's a nonsense. We are wishing Council would bring Heritage & Access experts together & lock them in a room till they have a solution that satisfies both aspects!

Please come along to the meeting on 7 March. What sort of development do you want to see at the gateway to our village?

Kate Westoby

**2017 Fair day triple Gold Star award goes to Castlecrag Cellars** who were super obliging on the day. Not only did they host a wine-tasting, they also gave up driveway access to their Cellars without so much as a whimper. Local resident George is one of our longest serving business owners (second only to Mary perhaps) and his generosity is greatly appreciated. Make sure you check out his latest offering of fine wines.

## LEONARD COHEN – The Haven Amphitheatre's newest fundraiser

PATRICIA O'CALLAGHAN is 'one of the best singers ever to come out of Canada' (*Vivascene*). She has performed for the Haven Amphitheatre on several occasions.

When Patricia heard about the fundraising efforts to help rebuild The Haven Amphitheatre stage, she generously offered to perform a one-off Sydney show on **Saturday 24th March 2018 at The Concourse Theatre, Chatswood.**

The program showcases songs by legendary compatriot Leonard Cohen.

*'There is a vulnerable candor to her approach ... a truly exceptional blend of natural expressiveness and masterful coloration ... her tender versions of Cohen's 'Take this Waltz' and 'Hallelujah' are revelatory.'* – Billboard Magazine

Patricia has sung with some of the world's great artists and ensembles (Bryn Terfel, Don Byron Quartet, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra), and has performed in venues that range from London's Royal Opera House to New York's Noho cabaret Le Poisson Rouge.

This is a way of contributing to the Haven rebuilding project whilst being wonderfully entertained. Win win!

For more details, or if you would like to make a fully tax deductible donation, visit [www.havenpromotions.com/](http://www.havenpromotions.com/)

**TO BOOK NOW:** call 8075 8111, visit The Concourse Box Office in person or online at [www.theconcourse.com.au](http://www.theconcourse.com.au). Adults \$70, Concession \$65.

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## From The Mayor



Hello, and what a perfect time it is to get out and about to explore the outdoors. With park upgrades and easy access information about bushwalks, now is the time to be

a tourist in your own backyard.

Consider visiting Castlecrag's The Bailey and Cortile Reserve as they've recently been refreshed with new playground and picnic area upgrades. The Bailey's work was finished in December with new swings, embankment slide, timber lizard sculpture, new picnic setting, bench seat, name sign and planting. Cortile Reserve also received a facelift, with a new embankment slide, carousel, cubby house, musical chimes bridge, timber lizard, sandstone water dragon sculpture, timber leaf seat, new sandstone edging and planting. A replacement picnic table and timber bench seat will be installed in February.

Curious bushwalkers can now access all they want to know about the history and significance of the trails they explore through a network of QR codes. The codes are around beautiful Castlecrag and can be seen on track markers and entry points. Using your phone, scan the QR code at the start of the walk and at points of interest along the way and the map will show you your location along with information about the walks including detail on Walter Burley Griffin, his wife Marion Mahony Griffin and their design ethos.

Also, don't forget the "Willoughby Walks" interactive self-guided walking tour app. It currently features audio and visual information for the Flat Rock Gully walk. Over the next year, more audio and information will be added for other walking trails, including Castlecrag. I encourage you to get out and about to enjoy our incredible area.

Also, a quick update on the proposed changes to Edinburgh Road. As previously reported, Roads and Maritime Services have suggested a new right turn bay on Edinburgh Road, westbound direction,

at the intersection of Eastern Valley Way, Castlecrag. It aims to improve access and safety for road users, while maintaining traffic flow. The proposal however will see some car parks removed on Edinburgh Road. Roads and Maritime Services started community consultation in December and a public info session is planned before a decision is finalised. Keep an eye out for the details.

Please have a say about the future of Willoughby by visiting our website to fill out our short survey. This information will be used to make plans for the next ten years and your views are important.

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](mailto:gail.giles-gidney@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## Our Village of the future ...continued from page 1

After the presentation, the Director of the firm City Planning Works, Michael Neustein, spoke to the meeting. This firm has been engaged to provide planning advice to the owner of The Quadrangle. Michael outlined some of their thinking regarding the shopping Centre. He noted that:

- They were looking at providing significant additional accommodation on their site, for people in the suburb who might be looking to downsize;
- They are currently working on the vision and design principles of the site and possible development scenarios which may involve more development;

- Their timeframe for the redevelopment of the site was for completion within 5 years; and
- They were prepared to look at sacrificing some of the site to provide for a "slip lane" in front of the redeveloped site to improve the flow of traffic turning left from Edinburgh Rd East into Eastern Valley Way.

Michael and the Council's Planning Manager, Ian Arnott, have agreed to speak at the 7 March General Meeting about these plans and scenarios and to take questions.

## Community Awards 2017



(L to R) Sandra Odorisio, Paul Stokes, Kate Westoby, Geraldine Doogue, Trent Zimmerman, Lindy Batterham and Mark Crew at the North Sydney Community Awards Ceremony, 2017. Mark Crew received an individual award for services to the community and CPA reps received a Community Group of the year award from local Federal member, Trent Zimmerman.

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## Local kids skip off to China

Group skipping has come a long way from the playground chanting games like "Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around" that many of us remember from school days. Whilst it still occurs in the schoolyard from time to time, skipping rope is now a competitive International Sport.

Northbridge Knockouts is a group of highly talented skippers. It has been around since 2001, started by Takashi Ogawa, a teacher at Northbridge Public School. They now compete at a State and National level. Some have qualified to compete individually in the 2018 World Rope Skipping Championships, to be held in Shanghai in July.

They recently performed at our local fair. The Progress Association was so impressed with the enthusiasm and talent of these young athletes that a contribution was made towards their fundraising effort for Shanghai.

Two of the proud and highly skilled members of Northbridge Knockouts are Castlecrag residents Hattie Tonkin and Robbie Graham. They both qualified as Individual Masters in the upcoming Worlds competition to represent their country in solo events. I asked them about the sport that has clearly become their passion.

### Where and how often do you train?

We train at Northbridge Public School hall and St Marks Church hall 5 to 6 times a week coached by an older skipper who recently completed her HSC. We compete in a group of 5 to make a competitive team called Northbridge Sapphire, within the Club Northbridge Knockouts.

### How long have you been skipping?

*Robbie (age 11)* – I began to skip in year 1, but I went on to compete in my first competition at a State and then National level in year 2. That year I competed as a soloist and again in year 3. In year 4 I was put in my first team, Northbridge Turquoise. In year 5 several members of my team left



*Robbie Graham and Hattie Tonkin doing the 'suicide' move. Photo: John-actioninfocus*

and I was relocated to Northbridge Sapphire which led me to where I am now, training to represent Australia in Shanghai this year.

*Hattie (age 12)* – I have been skipping since year 1, but I only started skipping at a competitive level in Year 2. I began in the 8 and under team with 3 other girls. In Year 5 Robbie joined the team and the Northbridge Sapphires became a mixed team. In year 6 our team won overall, and we qualified for internationals.

### What is it that you like about skipping?

The team environment; new friends; great entertainment; thorough inner satisfaction; greater levels of fitness; all stuffed in one highly intense, enjoyable package. These are only some of the innumerable reasons Robbie and I adore skipping.

### At the Castlecrag Fair you performed on the road. What's your preferred surface?

We skip on a wooden floor- the ropes catch on any rough surface, and with the high and/or fast jumping and acrobatics it needs a little bit of give unlike something like concrete.

### How many are in Northbridge

### Knockouts? How many are from Castlecrag? Are they all students and ex-students of NPS?

There are around 40 children/teens, a good number of which are from Castlecrag. Everyone is spread out across a wide range of schools, with ages ranging from 8 to 21.

### Where have you travelled with the team to compete and perform?


Last year we went to Brisbane. The year before it was Canberra.

### How many of the team are going to China?

20 skippers have qualified for Internationals, but getting everyone to China and back is costly and with some HSC students, only 17 are able to go. We really appreciate the donation from the Progress Association to help us on our way.

### You can donate to team Sapphire at [www.gofundme.com/sapphires2018](http://www.gofundme.com/sapphires2018).

If you have a child who may be interested in learning to skip like these champions, details of the Northbridge-based group can be found at [www.jumpfit.com.au/](http://www.jumpfit.com.au/).



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## A Fair day after all!



Local talent Buskers...

After many days of heavy rain, we had a beautiful sunny day for the bi-annual Castlecrag Fair, held later than usual on 15 November, 2017. People came out in large numbers, perusing the community groups' stalls and works by local artists and artisans, who included sculptors, ceramicists, painters, photographers, jewelers and even a candle-stick maker.

Artists from the Workshop Arts Centre provided hands on experiences for anyone curious to try print-making. The second-hand clothing stall, at the mouth of The Parapet, was a huge success with many people clinching wonderful bargains for quality clothes. It raised over \$4000 for a village in Malawi.

The oral history tent proved popular with people of all ages. More than twenty memories were recorded of life in the Crag



Anyone for a Scout sausage?

over the years. We hope to show some of the interviews at the AGM in June. We are grateful to all those who took time to share memories of place. This CPA project is ongoing and will continue to document the cultural memories of our community.

WEPA lived up to their reputation selling healthy native plants and giving free advice to local gardeners. Nearby, the Walter Burley Griffin Society received much interest in a display of knitlock wall and roof tiles. Knitlock was patented by Griffin and David Jenkins in 1917 and was used in five of the Griffin houses in Castlecrag.

The Haven Amphitheatre Committee promoted the upcoming fundraising concert for the new stage (see story on page 3) and the scouts barbequed sausages generously donated by Castlecrag Meats.

Other group stalls included St James



Gay and Pat at the WEPA stall...

Church, Conservation Society, Northbridge Sailing Club and Willoughby Friends of Timor Leste.

Apart from the wildlife show, the entertainment was all local talent. The Northbridge Knockouts (p 5), the choir, Willoughby Ukestars and numerous kids displaying their talents, all contributed to what has been described by many as the best fair ever. A big thanks to Simone Selby for her huge effort organizing the stalls.

Simone swears it's her last fair, but we hope it's battle fatigue talking and she'll be back in 2019. If not, the CPA will be looking for someone or people like Simone who believes contributing to the well-being of their community is an important and meaningful thing to do in one's life.

With thanks to John Steel, Jan Felton and Lindy Batterham for the photos on pages 6 & 7.

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# Bee Inspired



Liz Powell helps Sam Robinson with the bee hotel

The WCC Bushland stall attracted *Crag* readers like bees to a honey pot keen to know more about the Native Bee Hotel and it's clientele. With the help of Jan and Liz, fairgoers helped furnish the individual apartments for native solitary bees using a variety of materials like bamboo, clay and timber logs.

Council Environmental officers, Liz Powell and Jan Felton, designed the compartments of the Walter Burley Griffin inspired Hotel and architect/ model maker Simon Grimes devised its construction and built the hotel with Liz. Now fully assembled, the bee hotel has been located in Cortile Reserve between The Parapet and the shopping village.

Providing solitary native bees with the habitat they need for breeding is a great



The Cortile bee hotel fully assembled

way to get to know what species are present. The majority of Australia's 1660 native bee species are solitary bees, with 60 species known in Sydney. Unlike the better known native Sugarbag bees that naturally build a large 'brood' colony in tree hollows, the solitary bees construct or use small tunnels in dry soil banks, timber and other plant material to build their linear brood chambers. Our Native Bee Hotel has utilised similar components to those used naturally. Bees visiting the hotel are easy to observe and identify. Refer to pics below the hotel and in *Crag* #200. Other insects may also visit and nest in the hotel. The pollen



Sofia and Harry Horder with part of the bee hotel

provisions they carry on their body can distinguish most solitary native bee species. People are encouraged to observe the hotel to see who takes up residence. That means taking time and being patient. If you miss seeing the bees all is not lost. Observe the detail. Once a bee has finished filling one narrow chamber with food and eggs it will close it off. The way the closure looks helps identify the species of bee using that nesting hollow. Masked Bees produce a cellophane-like structure across the entry. Resin Bees will use plant material or wood resins to close their brood entries. Remember, these solitary bees are wonderful pollinators. If you see them please be respectful, bee entranced, but leave them be.

Liz Powell  
Habitat Restoration Officer WCC

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## Obituary: Harold Cedric Spies 9 March 1920 – 18 December 2017

Harold was born in Campsie, NSW, the youngest of four children, about half an hour after his twin sister Peggy. He was two years younger than his elder siblings Joyce and Roy, also twins.

Harold's father Ferdinand and mother Edith raised the family in Campsie then Oatley. His father's forebears were prosperous flour millers who left Bavaria to escape persecution of Catholics. They later settled in Mudgee.

Harold's detailed recollection of childhood escapades and his schooling was phenomenal and indicative of an acuity of mind remaining with him until the end of his life. He had to leave school at Sydney Technical High School in 3rd year on his 15th birthday in 1935 to help support the family through the Great Depression. Through family friends, he got a job as Junior Laboratory Assistant in the Bacteriology Department of the new Medical School at the University of Sydney. There he met Dr Neil Goldsworthy, who recognised Harold's potential and became his mentor for many years.

Harold was profoundly affected by his experiences growing up during the Depression. He was a life-long Socialist and an activist for progressive causes and social justice, and, particularly in later years, for environmental causes.

He continued his education after work, three nights a week at Sydney Technical College, graduating with an Associate Diploma in Chemistry. During the war Harold was seconded to the Pathology Department at Royal North Shore Hospital. In 1947 Harold married Clare Olive and they had two sons, Peter and John. They bought a block of land in Loftus for £250 and built a house with the help of neighbours and relatives. They were active in local Progress Association affairs. In 1964 they bought a cottage at Lake Berringer on the South Coast. Though since rebuilt, it is still the place for many happy family holidays – fishing, swimming, boating and bushwalking.

In the early 70s, Harold and Clare split up and in 1977 he married Gaynor McCoombe, beginning another phase of his interesting life.

Harold and Gay commissioned a stylish new home deep in the Castlecrag bush, where they shared 40 wonderful years together. Harold worked at the Institute of Dental Research and later at the Sydney Technical College along with Gay, lecturing in microbiology. His passion for his subject, deep knowledge, enthusiasm for learning, as well as his patience and profound



humanity ensured he was an outstanding teacher. Harold was also a proud trade unionist following in the footsteps of his father. At the time of his retirement in 1985 he was a member of the NSW Teachers Federation.

Harold led educational walks observing fungi in local bushland for Willoughby Council and was an early member of Council's Bushland Advisory Committee. Harold and Gay continued a deep interest in politics. They were local environmental activists, stalwarts in the Willoughby Environmental Protection Association (WEPA). Harold was a founding member and Committee member until early 2017. He was a long-standing member of the Castlecrag Conservation Society and for many years it's President. He wrote the Society's newsletter, "Conservation Update". He was also an active member and former committee member of the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Harold and Gay learnt bush regeneration in 1980 with the pioneer, Joan Bradley, and worked tirelessly for 32 years restoring local bushland, particularly on the Sugarloaf Project. He staffed innumerable stalls at local fairs promoting native plants for local gardens. John's decision to settle in Thailand led to many trips to Southeast Asia for Gay and Harold, who travelled extensively in Laos and Thailand.

Harold was a deep thinker, a man of deeply held beliefs and commitment to social justice, human rights and peace. He loved reading (and was devastated when his eyesight would no longer allow it)

and was a life-long learner. He loved the natural environment and sought locally and through political activism and community involvement to protect it. In 2004 Harold Spies was awarded the Willoughby Citizen of the Year Award.

He was also inducted into the Allen Strom Hall of Fame by the Nature Conservation Council. This award was specifically intended for individuals who have had the courage to challenge government and non-government decision makers.

As the century turned and Harold was getting older he had a number of physical setbacks. Gay's support enabled Harold to live at home, down those 130 odd steps, designed by Gay, built by Harold, until his death.

How do you sum up the life of a man who lived through 80 years of the tumultuous 20th century plus the better part of 20 years into this century? Well I think Harold Spies lived his life to the full, he was involved and active in his life and received great joy and satisfaction from it. Harold was pretty much a life-long atheist so was not expecting an afterlife. But he was pretty happy with the one he had, and rather proud of his longevity.

Harold touched the lives of so many people in a positive way during his lifetime: family and friends, colleagues and students, fellow travellers and even foes (not that he had many). He was respected, implicitly trusted and admired.

What an extraordinary life. What an extraordinary man.

– Adapted from the Eulogy by Peter Spies.



# Griffin Reserves Advisory Group

A small group of dedicated Castlecrag residents known as the Griffin Reserves Advisory Group meet four times per year to inspect some of the many reserves, pathways and drainage reserves and road islands of the former Griffin residential estates – Castlecrag and Haven Estates.

The committee's role is to:

1. Monitor and advise Council on the health and condition of bushland in the open spaces of the Griffin Heritage Conservation Area.
2. Encourage visitation, promotion and enhancement of the natural and built features of the Griffin Reserves.
3. Monitor and review the Griffin Reserves Castlecrag Plan of Management on an ongoing basis by identifying any deficiencies/improvements to that plan.

At their last meeting the group visited both Turret and Cortile Reserves and made various recommendations for improvements. The photo above shows the group at the seating area they recommended for the western entry pathway to Cortile Reserve. Its concept design was prepared by member and landscape architect David Martin who is missing from the photo.

Another of the GRAP recommendations that Council is currently working on is an upgrade to the Griffin Centre signage that has degraded over time. Interpretive



Left front to back: Mathew Keighery, Barbara Ground, Charlotte Francis  
Right front to back: Sue Burk, Mark Crew and Adrienne Kabos.

signage is being developed which enables visitors coming to Castlecrag to get information about the four documented Castlecrag Walks, designed on GRAP's recommendation, which explore the heritage significance of the Griffin residential estates.

The owners of the Griffin Centre and Council have agreed to upgrade the existing three panelled signage stand.

One panel will continue to have information about Walter Burley Griffin and a new second panel will have a map showing the four walking tracks and points of interest. The third panel will show the shop leaseholders.

Jan Felton  
Community Projects Officer  
WCC Bushland team



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## The Houses of Castlecrag

*Ben Gerstel is a local architect and volunteer guide for the Australian Architectural Association ([www.architecture.org.au](http://www.architecture.org.au)).*

### 36 Linden Way, Castlecrag

Castlecrag is a treasure chest of hidden architecture. The house at 36 Linden Way, Castlecrag has a minimal street presence, but a huge impact upon entry. You are bowled over by the clarity of design, which engages the stunning views of Sailors Bay, Northbridge and The Spit beyond. The house was completed in 2007 and designed by the firm, Engelen Moore (Tina Engelen and Ian Moore) a partnership that has since dissolved.

The previous house on the site did not maximise either the views or the light. Through the planning process, the architects ensured several existing lower ground floor walls and the sandstone street wall were retained to satisfy Council's alterations and additions requirements. From the street, this textured, curved stone wall hides the ground floor which is in strong contrast with the steel framed glass boxes on top.

The site is long and narrow and fans out to the west. The house is designed as three connected pavilions that are not in alignment with each other, so as to create courtyards in between. The first pavilion, the public pavilion, is bound by a perimeter of glass, which contains the kitchen, living, and dining rooms and an expansive terrace to capture the views. The second pavilion contains the children's bedrooms and the third is the main bedroom, ensuite and walk-in robe. Downstairs are ancillary rooms: a rumpus room, study, music room, bathroom, a fourth bedroom, cellar, garage and laundry.

The first pavilion also houses an ingenious red box which disguises a myriad of things

such as the guest toilet, cloak cupboard, cavity sliding doors, pantry, fridge and freezer, glassware and kitchenware to name a few. Running parallel to "the box" is a 5 metre long kitchen island topped with stainless steel. Another feature of the house is the stainless steel staircase, a 900 kg construction which was craned into the house.

The house is located on the southern side of the Castlecrag peninsula and the architects designed skillion roofs (one way sloping roofs) for the first and third pavilions with skylights to the north to maximize available sunlight. A flat roof was adopted for the second pavilion that also contains a skylight.

The terrace of the first pavilion overlooks the swimming pool. The old pool has been incorporated into the new design as a 40,000 litre water-retention tank.

The house, believed to be the largest single residence designed by Engelen and Moore at the time, is a typical example of their work. Its size allowed inclusion of large amounts of joinery enabling all

manner of clutter to be hidden. Strong lines, exaggerated eaves, extensive use of steel, glass and aluminium finishes, with a palette of neutral colours offset by the use of a single dazzling primary colour for one design element. White walls inside and out round out the design aesthetic.

Other features of their work include a firm belief in the power of natural ventilation, hence little or no air conditioning (although compromises were negotiated) and a dim view of exposed control panels like alarm, C-Bus and smoke detectors. The houses' absence of visible downpipes and guttering is another Engelen and Moore trade mark.

The clients engaged these architects because they were interested in the uniqueness of their work. They enjoy living in this house and like its discrete streetscape, with the house's proportions and design only being revealed upon entry.



*Photo: Ben Gerstel*

**Ben Gerstel**

**Ben Gerstel Architecture Pty Ltd**

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# Cortile Reserve Parkcare



Cortile Reserve is a quaint, little park that packs a lot of colour and grunt into its small size. Located close to the Edinburgh Road shops and part of the Griffin Reserve network, the reserve gets its colour from the many native Australian plants that have been planted and the grunt comes from the social tennis players you can hear going for a forehand winner on a Sunday morning!

The name aka Corteille Reserve (French version) like many of the street and reserve names in Castlecrag comes from components of a castle. A cortile is an internal courtyard enclosed by walls of a building. Here it refers to the park being surrounded by houses and garden fences rather than walls. It's a special place that is home to two tennis courts, a recently renovated children's playground, a newly installed native bee hotel, picnic table and chairs and a wide variety of native plants.

It's also home to a Parkcare group consisting of four regular, dedicated volunteers and a few that helpfully pitch in when possible. The group have made some fantastic gains over the last 12 months including planting out and maintaining a new garden bed, both pathways into the

reserve and an opened up garden bed after two large trees were removed.

Rather than writing New Year's Resolutions that we will never keep, our group's goals for 2018 are to maintain the diverse native plants already planted and plant more interesting and colourful natives-especially plants that solitary bees like. Another goal is to install more plant labels to show passers-by what can be grown in their garden and to attract new volunteers to the group.

Cortile Reserve is a popular place with many people playing tennis, using the children's playground or for people who use it as a quick shortcut to the shops. It would be great if anyone who regularly uses or who passes through, maybe next time stops and just gives an hour or two of time. Maybe your new year's resolution is to contribute to the local community? What better way to do that than at the colourful and sometimes grunty Cortile Reserve.

The group meets on the 1st Sunday of each month from 8.30 – 11.30am. For more information please contact the group convenor Sue Burk on 0404 470 443.

*Stuart Hall*

## 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 Sunday of the Month

- Gargoyle Bushcare  
9-12noon  
Contact Cherrie Wilson 0478 181 182
- Keep Reserve  
9-12noon  
Contact Matthew Keighery  
0408 203 511

### Third Sunday of the Month

- Casement Reserve  
8.30-11.30  
Contact Sue Burk 0404 470 443
- Torquay Estate  
9-12noon  
Contact Jo Nolan 0419 234 235
- Lookout Reserve  
9-12noon  
Contact Jessica Davis 0431 317 756  
or Adrienne Kabos 9298 3761
- Retreat Reserve  
9-12noon  
Contact Lorraine Cairnes 9958 1213  
or Jill Newton 9967 4933

### Fourth Sunday of the Month

- Linden Way Reserve  
9-12noon  
Contact WCC 9777 7875

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Closes 28 February

Share your vision, values and what you think is important for our future suburb and city with Council. A nifty interactive map enables one to mark places you love & suggest improvements for other spots.

### Wildlife Citizen Sciences Forum

Tuesday, 27 February 2018 9.00am – 12 noon

Royal Botanical Gardens

Citizen Science programs are an empowering way to contribute to environmental conservation. Find out about local wildlife Citizen Science projects like the Wild Pollinator Count that you can be involved in and meet the scientists that run them.

Bookings essential at:

[willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Whats-On/willoughby-diary-dates/](http://willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Whats-On/willoughby-diary-dates/)

### Lantern Making Workshop & Parade

#### Harmony Day Events – Chatswood Mall

Saturday, 17 March 2018 10.00 am – 2.15pm

Be a part of Harmony Days celebrations by creating your own beautiful lantern for the Lantern Parade in The Chatswood Mall. Join a pyramid or ball lantern making workshop. Make an individual lantern to take home after the parade, or drop by to contribute to the giant Harmony letter lanterns. This activity is suitable for all ages! Children aged 3yrs+ must be accompanied by an adult. This is a messy gluey activity, so please wear suitable clothing.

Friday 23 March 6.30pm – 8.00pm

The Harmony Day Lantern Parade will be a fun evening celebrating the cultural diversity of our city. Be part of something special and contribute to the collective wonder your community will experience as they watch the dazzling parade through the Chatswood Mall. We envision lanterns lighting up our market area and transforming our mall for a vibrant evening with live music and cultural performances.

Contact: Oceana Kovacs on 02 9777 7595 or email

[oceana.kovacs@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:oceana.kovacs@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

### Drawn to Nature - Drawing and Bushwalking

Sunday, 25 March 2018 10.00 – 12.30pm

Reserve, Sugarloaf Crescent, Castlecrag

Join Australian artist, Patrick Shirvington, for a drawing bushwalk through Harold Reid Reserve, describing his process of connecting to the Australian landscape through art. Participants will learn to identify flora in the landscape and draw their observations with pencil and paper.

\*\*Please note places are limited, bookings essential

Contact: Emma Hayes on 9777 7942 or email

[bushwalk@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushwalk@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

### Are you a 'Treble' Maker in disguise?

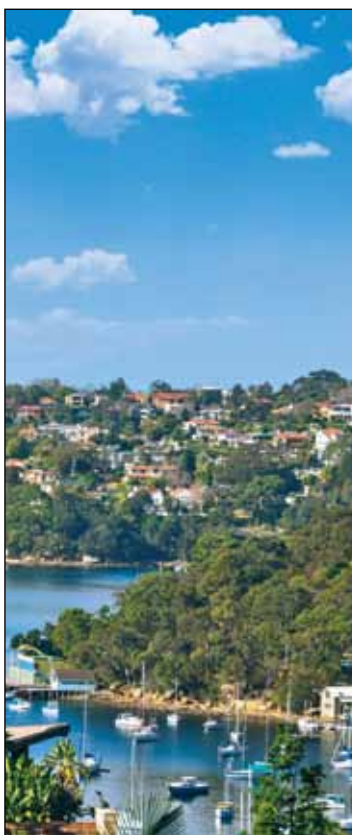
Tuesday nights, weekly, in Northbridge

A new local choir THE TREBLE MAKERS meets Tuesday nights weekly in Northbridge. Anybody who loves to sing; budding professionals or beginners are all invited to join. Build self-confidence, have loads of fun, improve your singing technique, meet new friends, laugh and sing then this is the choir for you! Songs cover all contemporary genres; heartfelt ballads to toe tapping soul, pop, rock, gospel, swing and pop/classical crossover.

Contact: Louise, anytime, on 0452 006 693

Diary Dates is a service by the Castlecrag Progress Association.

Please contact: [info@castlecrag.org.au](mailto:info@castlecrag.org.au) with details of forthcoming events and activities for inclusion.



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