

Local wins National Portrait Award

Alex Vaughan, Middle Harbour and the winning shot *Story p8.*

Respected Elder's speech

Dee Street recalls herstory of The Quadrangle Battle *Story p6.*

Bid to preserve Griffin Centre heritage

Whilst proposed changes to the Quadrangle are being hotly discussed, Willoughby Council's draft Local Centres Strategy for Castlecrag shopping village also includes the possibility of shop top housing over the Griffin Centre, and extending the building around over the lower carpark to The Postern. Although favoured over some of Council's original possible scenarios which proposed demolition of the centre, the revised plan raises concern and has led the Walter Burley Griffin Society to nominate the building for heritage listing with Council. These shops were the first to be built in Castlecrag as part of the Griffin Estate, at the entry and were integral to Griffin's plan for a self-sufficient community. Building commenced in 1924 to plans designed by local architect/builder, S.A Spargo and approved by W.B Griffin. There were four shops up top with a large space underneath that became a bakery in early 1930s. The baker's oven can still be seen in the Cellars today, behind the chardonnay. It sits a stone's throw from the new Motza Pizza Oven which has finally brought a new lease of life to the basement of the Griffin

Centre, with its freshly designed outdoor eating area.

This basement area is of cultural significance, as it was where the very first Progress Association general meeting was held on 10 November 1925. The recorded object of the Association was, and still is, *"to do everything possible to further the*

interests of the district of Castlecrag". The Griffins were active members, with Walter serving on the Executive Committee from that time, and Marion being President of the "Junior Association", which organised activities for local children. Louise Lightfoot, who went on to found The Australian Ballet was her deputy.

... continued on page 3



*Watergate Reserve – right in your backyard.
Explore together on 28 July – details p5.
Photo: Adrian Spragg.*

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NOTICE OF CPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Election of Office Holders

Wednesday, 19 June 2019
8.00pm

Guest Speaker: Denis Fernandez, Councillor WCC
Traffic Management and an Integrated Transport Strategy

In the Marion Mahony Hall, Glenaeon School, 117 Edinburgh Rd, Castlecrag
All welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

RSVP to info@castlecrag.org.au if you want to attend or present.

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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Editor Lindy Batterham

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
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

John Steel at
editors@castlecrag.org.au

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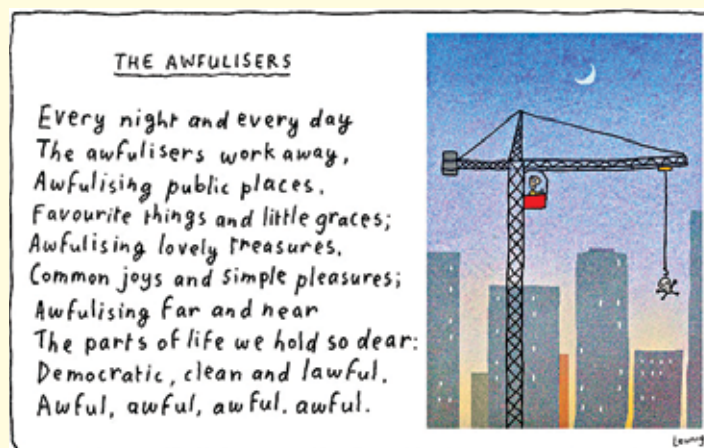
The CPA and *The Crag* is not responsible for
information or advice in contributed articles
or letters. Readers should seek their own
personal, professional advice.

From the Editor

Fires in bellies have been ignited all
over the suburb regarding the proposed
changes to the zoning of the Local
Environment Plan (LEP) for our shopping
village. In this edition, editorial space is
given over to accommodate snapshots
of the many residents' letters to both
the CPA & Council on the issue. You will
note there are no letters in support of
Scenario 4 which
advocated for 5
storeys – this is
because no letters
were received by
the CPA with this
view. What was
consistently referred
to was the heritage
and Griffin values
and specialness of
our suburb.
It's not only
the physical

environment that makes it so, it's also the
community spirit! Please show you care
and get involved! People are needed to
help organise the fair (from now on) and
on the day.

Or you could hop over the fence & help
sometime at your closest bushcare site.
You never know, you might even enjoy
yourself!



...with thanks Mr Leunig.

Excerpts from residents' letters

We have only lived in Castlecrag for four
years, we have two teenage children and
as a family we have lived in 7 countries,
personally I have done 14 international
moves, and can safely say I know when I
have found a special place, and this is it.

LH 3/4/19

Castlecrag is not just another suburb or set
of shops along an urban transport corridor.
I urge council and those in a position to
oppose this ... to resist making Castlecrag
into yet another overcrowded, impersonal,
homogenous medium rise shopping centre.
It is unnecessary and would be permanently
destructive.

AR 17/3/19

The locals of Castlecrag are so proud of
our quiet, little bushland village. We really
want something special at the gateway to

our unique spot. It is so important that we
get the look and feel just right, so that it
fits in with our Castlecrag values. One main
concern for me is the style of development
that may be allowed to go ahead. Looking
at Dr Quek's other projects, they are very
corporate and harsh. We need to ensure
that the end product is respectful of the
bushland character of our area, so that we
conserve this significant garden suburb for
future generations to enjoy.

EH 9/3/19

Many CPA members and residents were
very concerned about the impact of any
future development of the Castlecrag
local centre on traffic flows and demand
for parking. Castlecrag is on a peninsular
with a single road for traffic entry and exit.

... continued on page 11

Keep *The Crag* coming to your door!

JOIN or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP to CPA

Visit 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 \$
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Castlecrag 2068

Queries to:
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From the President



As I write this report, the Right-turn indicator for the traffic lights at Eastern Valley Way is being installed. RMS will monitor the intersection for some time to ensure that the

new sequences are working properly.

The consultation process for the Council's Centres Strategy has now finished. CPA's principal submission was the motion passed overwhelmingly at our last General Meeting to reject Council's Option 4 for Castlecrag and begin a fresh review. There was near unanimous agreement that the 5 storeys, detailed in Option 4 for the Quadrangle site, were simply unacceptable. We hope to see the final version when it goes to Council later this year. The adopted strategies for the Centres will then form the basis for a review of the Local

Environment Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs) which will entail further community consultation before the new plans are put in place. So don't hold your breath!

Meanwhile, both CPA and the Walter Burley Griffin Society (WBGs) have met again with Dr Quek about the redevelopment of the Quadrangle. Following our March meeting I sent a copy of our motion, rejecting Council's 5 storey option for the Quadrangle to Dr Quek and his team. We again made our position clear to Dr Quek and he told us that he is considering his options but still wishes to stay engaged with the community. He stated very clearly that he sees the Quadrangle as a signature project and he is looking for an outcome of which both he and the community can be proud.

Dr Quek wishes to initiate the Design Excellence Competition later this year and he proposes that the panel of designers each put forward 2 designs. One design for his preferred 5 storeys and a second design

for 4 storeys but with reduced public space. Dr Quek is absolutely firm that he could not do the project at 3 storeys and would have no alternative but to reluctantly sell and move on.

Our next General Meeting is our AGM when we re-elect the Committee. Following this, I have asked Councillor Denis Fernandez to address the meeting on the subject of an Integrated Transport Plan and we are aiming to have a traffic engineer come and talk to us about traffic planning and how it might relate to Castlecrag.

Remember to make sure you are financial before the meeting so that you can exercise your vote. I would also strongly encourage anyone who is a member to nominate for a position on the committee. One big challenge we have over the next few months is putting on the biennial Castlecrag Fair in October and, along with the other on-going issues, we could really use some more hands (and heads).

Paul Stokes

Griffin Centre heritage ...continued from page 1

Edgar Deans, Secretary of the Greater Sydney Development Association (Griffin's Company) and former Mayor of Willoughby (and also my uncle) recalled that "When we arrived here, the bakery was still cutting Casuarina trees for baking bread. I remember very clearly the wonderful bread they made there. Ivor Morton recalls that the baker delivered the bread by horse and cart in the 1930's." My cousin Margo Watson (nee Deans) remembers Billy the baker delivering the bread by horse and cart right up until after the end of the war.

The photo on the right, taken around 1925, shows the business of each shop. In the late 50's, local resident Ken Thomas

set up one of Australia's first supermarkets in the Centre. At one time it was a *Foodland* with bottle shop, then Jewel which, in 1978 moved to the newly built Quadrangle. In the 70's an additional shop was added at the eastern end of the Griffin Centre, in keeping with the character of the original four shops and following the same curved line and generous overhang, which now provides for pleasant al fresco seating at Cottage and Coast, Bai Yok, and the popular new Italian restaurant, Cento22. The Griffin Centre remains that which it has been since 1925 – an important part of our architectural, social and cultural heritage.



The Griffin Centre, as published in Castlecrag Album, a promotional booklet produced by the Greater Sydney Development Association c.1926.

Photo courtesy Batterham/Deans Family and Walter Burley Griffin Society

**Lindy Batterham,
with thanks to Adrienne Kabos**



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From The Mayor



Willoughby City Council will once again be a precinct in Vivid Sydney, the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the southern hemisphere.

From 24 May to

15 June, Chatswood CBD will transform for the fifth year in a row featuring world class talent, cutting edge technology and immersive light galleries.

I hope to see many of you out and about at this fantastic event which injects over \$4 million into our local economy. New highlights include daily talks at Chatswood Chase such as plant based eating, recycling and artist talks; as well as four Vivid Music concerts at The Concourse. Try to spot your house from the giant ferris wheel on Spring Street.

Local Village Centre and Housing Strategies

Council is planning for future housing needs and positioning our local centres for growth and change over the next 20 years. Thank you to the 636 people who participated in person at events and the more than 500 people who made

formal submissions online in our recent community consultation. More than 8,000 visits were made to Council's Have Your Say website during the three month consultation period.

While it is still early days in the feedback report analysis, it was evident during the consultation process that there were concerns about the height impact of potential development and traffic implications of any changes at the Quadrangle. I have heard these concerns and will keep you updated as the feedback is analysed and the strategies progressed.

Eastern Valley Way

Road and Maritime Services began work on the right hand turn at Eastern Valley Way on 15 April. They have indicated that weather permitting the project will be completed by 31 May. This is an important project for our area, improving access, safety and traffic flow. I will continue to provide updates from the RMS.

Bushland

One of the larger areas of bushland within the Griffin Reserves is the Watgate Reserve, which runs from Warners Park in Northbridge to the foreshores of Sailors Bay. Over many years of regeneration work, the Coachwood Forest has been protected

and enhanced by removing the once dominant and highly invasive privets. The Reserve Action Plan will soon be reviewed and community input will be invited.

An upgrade of the playground at Stoker Park on Edinburgh Rd is planned. Community comments on the playground plan will be invited in the near future. About 37 per cent of Willoughby residents are couples with children so upgrades to community playgrounds are always well received and Council appreciates your feedback.

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

Watgate Reserve



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TAKE A FREE TRIAL CLASS

Anyone for a bushwalk?

There are beautiful bushwalks in our area where one can be totally immersed in the trees, birdsong, creeks, waterfalls and rock outcrops and see no sign of human habitation. Some tracks are well-known, but others less so. Some people are a little timid to explore the bush on their own, others revel in the solitude.

The CPA is planning an informal circular winter bushwalk and welcomes residents who may not be familiar with the track to join in. All care taken, but no responsibility.

The walk will start at Casement Reserve and head down into Watergate Reserve to Sailor's Bay then come back up to The Palisade and into The Keep Reserve, bringing people up to The Rampart.

There are quite a lot of stairs leading down to the bay through this majestic forest, so be warned. If you're able, it's so very worth it! Once down in the valley it is hard to believe it is part of suburbia, and walkers can sometimes spot a lyrebird and hear its repertoire of mimicking calls.

Allow 1–1.5 hours. If raining, it will be cancelled.

If you have any questions write to info@castlecrag.org.au.

When: 10am – Sunday 28 July

Meeting place: Casement Reserve at The Redoubt



The track through Watergate Reserve leads to Sailors Bay Creek and the harbour. Photo: Adrian Spragg.

Route of the walking track from The Redoubt through Watergate and Keep Reserves to The Rampart.



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Quadrangle Herstory



Speech delivered at the CPA general meeting March 2019 by whom many would consider as one of Castlecrag's living treasures:

My name is Dee Street and I am honoured to be a Life Member of the CPA and the Castlecrag Conservation Society. I have been involved in many of the local issues and activities for over 50 years!

I am delighted to be invited here this evening, to give you a brief history of the development and building of the Quadrangle, as I was thrust into the forefront from the beginning to the end of that long and drawn out saga.

Sadly, I no longer live in the Crag; they were the best years of my life. With the benefits of hindsight, I may prevent some of the pitfalls you face today. As history has a habit of repeating itself, your requirements for suitable space and the style of buildings are similar to 40 years ago.

In 1977, the "bush telegraph" was **hot** with news that a large parcel of land on the corner of Eastern Valley Way and Edinburgh Rd had been sold and apartments or a hotel (and even a McDonalds) was to be built!!

By the time the Progress Association was informed, plans for a shopping complex had already been approved under delegated authority. As an alderman, I was the last to know as there was no mention of a development for Castlecrag in the Council papers.

When the movers & shakers in the Crag heard that a large complex was on the way, at our front door – all **hell** broke loose! There were demands for Castlecrag to secede from Willoughby Municipality, not for the first time! And maybe, not for the last! The press had a field day – the Aldermen had let the residents down!

After obtaining some of the facts from the

Mayor's secretary, we put together all the information, called another public meeting and informed the locals that a development had been approved and was underway.

There was no consultation with the residents or input to the plans.

They (residents) were **angry!**

WITH THEIR SUPPORT we decided to go to court and ... we **won!!**

How did we do it? And why?

1. The plans had been approved under delegated authority;
2. The zoning in Castlecrag, for neighbourhood shopping, was completely ignored;
3. The architect and developer were making a financial investment with no interest regarding the amenities required, nor the Community Village lifestyle, let alone the Walter Burley Griffin concept or the natural bushland environment;
4. With help from local lawyers and generous donations from residents, we had enough money to pay the legal fees -- so off we went to court!

After the hearing, I was appointed to liaise with the architect and developers on behalf of the residents, to ensure the plans were altered and the height of the building was reduced to our satisfaction.

Over the previous Christmas break, I had been in the USA with my family and stayed a few days in Carmel, California. I was so impressed with the beautiful landscape of the shopping village and brought the photos and brochures home.

When the time was right, I showed them to the architect. I explained to him, most forcefully, that if he could design a building as attractive and practical as Carmel, with reduced height and proper setbacks from the road a courtyard and outside dining, we would be happy.

What we have today, with the Quadrangle, was the end result of a **successful collaboration** and a good outcome at the time.

Finally, the Quadrangle was opened with much fanfare!

The Willoughby Brass

Band banged on. Balloons and people floated about. The Mayor arrived in great style – his name had been placed on the plaque and was unveiled with great flourish. He made a speech and thanked the Council!

The protesters took over and drowned him out, still demanding we secede from Willoughby Council.

The Mayor got the kudos, but **WE, the ratepayers, WON THAT BATTLE!**

Apart from her leadership at The Quadrangle, Dee has been actively involved in matters concerning Castlecrag for over 50 years:

- Discovery and unearthing of the Haven Amphitheatre, as well as initiating the first performance in 1976;
- Campaign against the Warringah Freeway;
- One of only 2 living Life Members of the CPA;
- Coordinated Castlecrag Heritage Festival 1976 in association with American Bicentenary;
- Alderman (these days Councillors) on Willoughby Municipal Council 1977–1980;
- Member of the Castlecrag Local Environment Plan Advisory Committee convened in 1981;
- President of the CPA 1984–1986
- Established Neighbourhood Watch in NSW.

Dee at Castlecrag Heritage Festival 1976



Fair Day comes around again

The much-loved Castlecrag Fair is on **Sunday, 20 October** this year.



The thrust will again be for the community to come together, for local Artists and Artisans to display and sell their work and for local performers and musicians of all ages to busk and strut their stuff. There will also be a number of interactive Art experiences for people of all ages to explore.

An exciting new addition this year will be a Classic Car display, hosted by local enthusiast Scott Graham who has been able to attract a good number of fabulous cars (usually parked away in local garages) to exhibit.

There has also been a suggestion to hold a photo competition as part of the Fair, of photos taken within the suburb, perhaps in different categories. What a wonderful way to document our community! Great idea – is there someone out there who will



step up and co-ordinate it?

The CPA has applied to WCC for a grant to help fund our biennial community fair. Without their support it has become unviable. Volunteer help is also crucial to the fair's viability and that's where YOU come in!

Many people will be needed to manage the traffic on the day with stop/go signs. Traffic and pedestrian management has become a big issue and the CPA has had to engage a traffic planner consultant to deliver a detailed plan to WCC, RMS and the police for approval. The authorities are demanding many traffic controllers, so even one hour of your day would help make the day happen. Two hours would be better! Please don't presume others will step up. At least four people are needed to cover the shifts done by our dear late

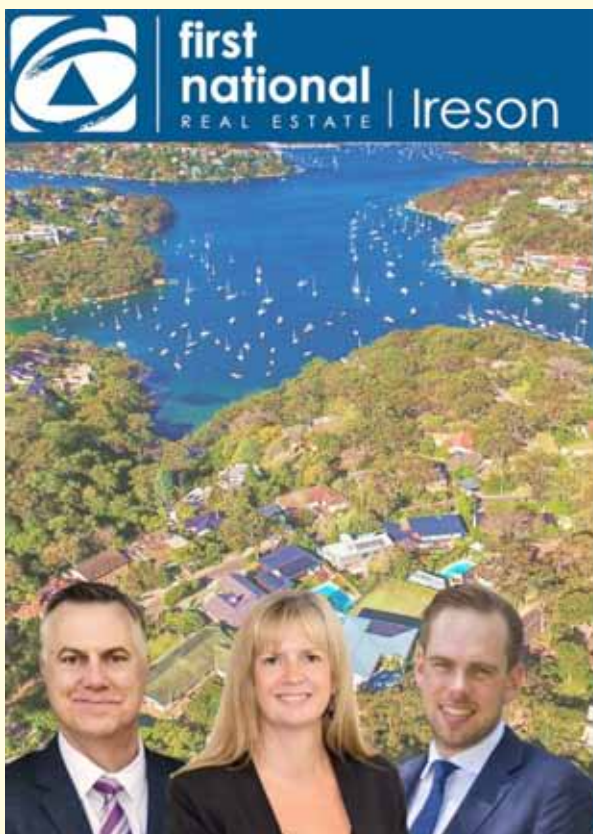


friend Rose Hazelwood who traditionally spent most of her day giving her services to her community as stop/go person. If you sign up we'll even supply the high viz vests and stop/go sign you need to do the job!

The CPA will again host a second-hand book stall. If you have donations please call Mark on 0412 971 861 for pick-up. Second-hand and sustainable goods stalls also welcome. There is an idea to have a big pre-loved clothing stall. Interested in co-ordinating or participating in this?

If you would like to hire a stall, design the poster, perform on the day (individuals, choirs & groups all welcome) or help the organising committee bring it all together, please get in touch.

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Capturing stories of Life

Local photographer Alex Vaughan is a recent winner of the 'Highly Commended Award' as part of the 2019 National Photographic Portrait Prize, exhibited recently at the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra. Over the last 10 years, she has gained places in a number of awards and built a vast clientele of actors and creatives in Australia, LA, New York and London.

Alex is a product of the artistic heritage of our suburb. She is a third generation Cragite and has lived here most of her thirty-six years, growing up in Raeburn Avenue and attending Castlecrag Infants in its final year, then Castle Cove Public, Mercy College and Willoughby Girls High School. Her first love was the performing arts, but she thought she should add a second string to her bow. Her father John, a keen amateur photographer, introduced her to photographic technique and her natural instincts kicked in from there.

In 1947, Alex's grandparents built a simple 2 bedroom cottage at the end of Edinburgh Road on the edge of Sugarloaf Bay. Alex and her partner Iain rented the family home for a couple of years after the death of her grandparents. Since that was sold, they rent locally.

When Alex's 96 year old grandmother was dying, she asked her family if she could document this really difficult, intimate time. They agreed, and the result was a series of very touching photos of her dying grandmother, one of which won her an



Alex with her grandfather Les and twin sister Adrienne. Photo John Vaughan

award at the ACMP Sony Projections in 2010 & the Head On Portrait Prize 2011. The same image was a finalist in the National Photographic Portrait Prize in 2011.

Alex has been messing about in boats on Middle Harbour with her twin sister Adrienne since they were babies. (photo). Their grandparents home had a boatshed and jetty. Alex is a 4th generation sailor. It was this love and familiarity of the bay that led her to the photo which recently won

her the prestigious National award.

In 2017 she was out on the bay when Gary, the renowned Middle Harbour coffee boat operator told her he'd met a family with 10 kids in a boat moored off Chinaman's Beach. Her curiosity was aroused and she set off to investigate.

Alex was greeted with smiling faces and enthusiastic greetings as she approached their boat. She sat, bobbing up and down in her dinghy, talking to the family for nearly 2 hours that first day. She learnt, amongst other things, that the Sumbawa family had a plan to sail around the world. The children were being home schooled and ranged in age from 15 years to in utero!

Initially, Beccie Soetekouw, in true Mother-Hen style, permitted Alex to take photos of the children on the nearby beach, but not on the boat. Alex obliged, and built up the trust of the family, which she says is the most important thing between a portrait photographer and her subjects. Subsequently, she was invited on board, after convincing mum that the family on the boat was the crucial story. Alex took about 25 shots of the scene and the result is the award-winning portrait of the family at sea.

This is the Artist's statement that accompanied the entry:

Beccie, Steve and their eleven children left rural Tasmania behind to take to the high seas on their thirteen-metre boat and full-time home, Sumbawa. Three day-old baby girl 'Squeak' is the

The winning image in ACMP Sony Projections, 2010 & the Head On Portrait Prize, 2011



Capturing stories of life cont...

first of the siblings to be born on the boat. Here, they take a break from their travels, anchoring off Chinaman's Beach in Sydney, Australia in February 2018.

Alex explained the background to the image she captured that day.

"Beccie had given birth on the boat 3 days before. Steve delivered the baby. That morning, she had gone ashore via their dinghy to take the baby for a check up at the local doctor in Mosman and do the grocery shopping, she walked and caught transport – quite remarkable for someone who gave birth days prior.

It was later that day when I went on board to document their story. The whole family came down to Canberra to be there for the awards. It was very special."

Alex has developed a long-term view about her connection with the Sumbawa family. All 13 of them! She hopes to follow their adventures as a family and visually document these children with an extraordinary childhood, as they move into their independent adult lives.

Alex has been putting energy into another long term project 'In Their Element'. Over a 30 year period she plans to document selective 'creatives', photographing them every 15 years. So far she has completed stage one with a number of people including Tim Minchin, Missy Higgins and fellow photographer Tamara Dean (winner of this year's Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize), to name a few.

When asked whether growing up in Castlecrag has had an impact on her work, she was very clear that growing up living so close to the bush has had a huge impact on her approach as a photographer. She is a regular walker through the local paths and tracks and prefers to work with natural light and shoot outdoors in nature wherever possible.

For more info and images of Alex's work go to www.alexvaughan.com.



The award winning portrait of the family at sea – Can you find all 11 children?

Proposal for opening up old path in Griffin Estate

Council is currently seeking community feedback to gauge the level of support for formalising and reconstructing parts of the pathway, between 18 The Scarp and 34 The Bulwark, to provide eastern access from the crest on Edinburgh Road, opposite Stoker Park, right down to the foreshore.

The expected benefit gained through the construction of a 50 metre pathway at the

site would be a reduction of pedestrian movement by 500 metres. Naturally, residents in The Scarp are particularly keen to see it reconstructed, but it would also benefit the many regular walkers in and to our suburb.

The Griffin Reserve Plan of Management (GRPOM) states that it is a desired part of the eastern pathway system providing access from the ridgetop (Edinburgh

Road) to the foreshore and to streets and properties in between.

The consultation period has been extended till 17 June 2019 so be sure to let council know if you would like to see it restored as a public pathway.

Read more about it on www.haveyoursay.willoughby.nsw.gov.au and either respond to the survey or write your own letter.

Castlecrag Notes

BushShare



Almost twenty Bushcarers from across Willoughby came together on Sunday 14 April in Keep Reserve for a new initiative called BushShare, where one group hosts other bushcarers so that they can share and learn more about each other's sites. Monique Van Vugt, Bushcare Supervisor from Willoughby City Council, provided some tube stock to be planted around the picturesque Warner's Park track entrance, from where it winds across the creek and up the hill to The Rampart.

Many hands certainly did make lighter work, and after a couple of hours weeding and planting under the ferns and towering cheese trees the group moved onto morning tea and chatting by the creek, around the seat dedicated to Anne and Lou Levy by their offspring Sandra & Peter Levy. Although no longer living here, Sandra maintains a relationship with the place of her childhood and joined the group on the beautiful sunny morning to help weed around the creek.

Thanks to all those Bush and Parkcarers who regularly help to look after our reserves & walkways. Our world would be a lot weedier without you!

Boomerang Bags – keep them coming back!

As reported in the last issue, there is a fabulous group of women who haul their

sewing machines up onto the big table at Cottage and Coast every Thursday to make cloth bags for us to use when we forget to bring our own shopping bags. Rather than buying the plastic bags at IGA in these circumstances, we can borrow a cloth boomerang bag. Only trouble is, people are forgetting to bring them back!

Please! It is a wonderful community service & a very practical way of reducing plastic use. Return the bags a la boomerang style to one of the two stands in the Quadrangle (beautifully handcrafted by ex WCC Councillor Adrian Cox) either at IGA or the Fruit shop. We need to keep the boomerang bags circling or in circulation!)



Rose's Plaque

In February a plaque in memory of lolly-pop lady Rose Hazelwood was installed at her crossing in High Street. The mayor

unveiled the plaque, with Rose's husband Frank in attendance, along with a small group of school children, parents, teachers and neighbours. RIP Rose.

Matthew's Brush-Tail

Here is a picture of a Brush-Tail Possum and the baby she is clutching, as well as Brownie the Chook laying an egg. Brushy hasn't yet found the new possum boxes that Leon has made and Council has put up, so she has been trying to make my chicken coop home.



Winter Appeal for Rough Sleepers

We are again initiating a winter appeal for the Wayside Chapel, inviting people to drop off any unwanted blankets or doonas which will be transported to the Wayside Chapel for distribution. Warm clothing, socks and coats also appreciated. A recent survey conducted in Chatswood CBD at 2.30am one Thursday counted over a dozen people sleeping rough in doorways and on the street. Some donations, if needed, may also go to these people via the local Missionbeat.

From **Monday 17 until Sunday 23 June** people can drop off blankets and leave them in the boxes and table provided on the front terrace of **163 Edinburgh Road**.

Ganache Patisserie

Congratulations to our local slice of France from Didier Sockeel and his team who were recent finalists in the Australian Small Business Champion Awards 2019.

Montessori woes

The Castlecrag Montessori School will be moving out of the St James Church hall at the end of this year after having run a popular early childhood program there for the last 27 years. The church has instead decided to lease the hall to Integricare, who plan to open a Christian Early Learning Centre in 2020. It is proposed the long day care centre's hours will be 7.30am-6pm, including school holidays, in order to cater to working families. The Montessori community is saddened by this and is desperately trying to find alternate premises in the area from which to run their program.

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Local voices ...continued from page 3

The capacity to manage traffic flows and parking demand is a necessary constraint on the density and scale of future development of the Castlecrag local centre. Zoning scenarios for the Castlecrag centre should be accompanied by modelling analysis of the traffic flows and parking demands.

This kind of modelling should inform development scenario consultation and decision-making processes, not something to be analysed later, well after the critical rezoning decisions have been made.

JT 27/3/19

Whilst I recognise that Council wishes to be proactive and plan for the future, I believe it is a grave mistake to forfeit our heritage in doing so. Within the larger Willoughby region we have the unique suburb of Castlecrag. It cannot be recreated once it is lost and its very uniqueness is threatened by the Draft Centres Strategy and the preferred scenario 4 proposal.

Please do not destroy the original single storey Griffin Centre Shops which were built in 1924 by allowing a three storey development. And please don't allow a five storey edifice/building at the entrance to our community which was so thoughtfully planned by the Griffins so that all the built structures might blend into the landscape...I recognise that we can't



Locals at the CPA General Meeting in March.

stop progress but surely there are clever designers who can make a viable plan for improving the existing Quadrangle Centre that is only three stories above the level of Edinburgh Road. The aim should be to serve our community not to compete with the shopping centres that already exist in Chatswood and nearby suburbs.

VC 28/3/19

Oversized, COMPLETELY ignores heritage, history and unique niche character of Castlecrag, exacerbates traffic issues, removes village character of shops, inconvenient, sets a dangerous precedent re further grabs for overdevelopment, excessively bulky, sprawling and huge. Overshadows and over-dominates the surroundings in complete opposition to Griffin philosophy.

I also remind Council that the CPA meeting of residents VOTED almost unanimously to go back to the beginning with proper

transparent ENGAGEMENT. Please do listen and honour this.

The Griffin Centre shops should definitely be left alone. All developments should be subservient to the natural environment and should complement it rather than dominate it.

FC 2/4/19

I am not a resident of Willoughby, however, I use Castlecrag shopping centre because of its friendly village atmosphere and have been impressed over the years how the housing and village has maintained its integrity all these years whilst Chatswood, Willoughby, Crows Nest and St Leonards have become concrete jungles.

RT 2/4/19

The Scenario you are entertaining is too high, too bulky, too dense and too ugly. Pedestrian safety is already a concern in this area. Parking will become impossible. We live in a village, not a developers' money-making paradise. Community amenity must be retained for Castlecrag residents. The proposed future overshadowing, inappropriate scale and lack of respect for the Griffin legacy are scandalous... Should you proceed with your proposed destruction of this suburb, we will sell and leave in disgust.

SB 16/4/19

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The Retreat Reserve, Castlecrag

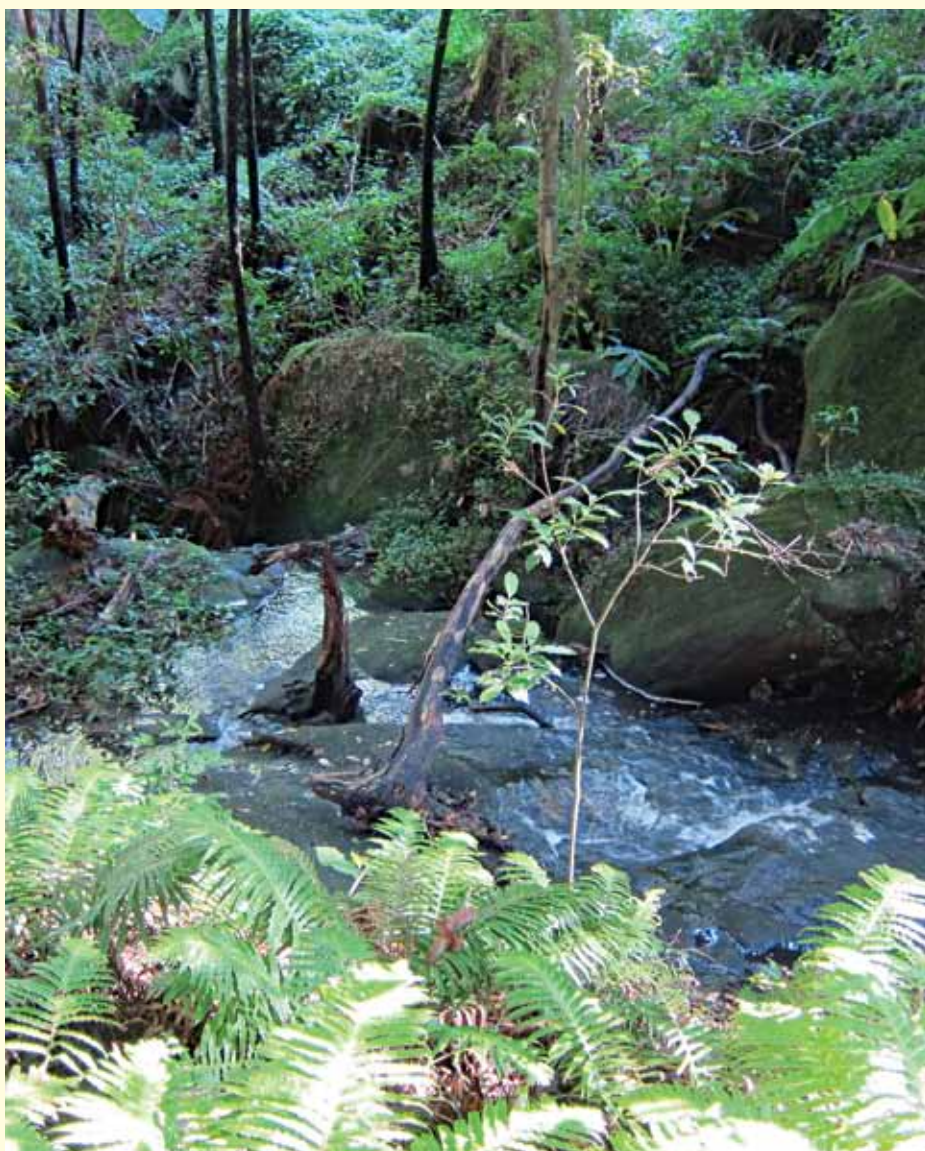


Photo: Jill Newton

The Retreat Reserve protects a natural watercourse and its surrounding natural vegetation. The creek is formed by the confluence of two smaller creeks leading down from Embrasure and Gargoyle Reserves above, flowing under The Bulwark in beautifully-built Griffin-era sandstone culverts. Much of the Reserve is quite

inaccessible because of steep sandstone outcrops in the upper areas, but a walking track from The Barricade links Castlehaven Reserve to Sailors Bay Reserve and provides some foreshore access.

The bushland here was the site of the earliest bushcare work in Castlecrag. In the 1960s the trio of Addie Saltis (No. 70

The Bulwark), and Addie and John Lee (No. 78 The Bulwark) spent one or two days each week, weeding the bushland and sometimes planting native Australian plants there. Unlike bushcare practice today, the species they planted were not always local natives, but natives from other parts of Australia. Some of these remain, and if they are not in danger of becoming weedy, they are left growing as part of the Reserve's historical heritage. These early bushcarers even installed a small irrigation system to nurture their new plants, fed by gravity from Retreat Creek.

Today's Retreat Bushcare group began in September 2006, following a call for members via letterbox drop by Council. The group now has a list of 15 active members, plus the advice of two expert mentors, and a superb professional Trainer, Helen Haigh, who has guided the group since its inception. Another ten members, with busy lives, come when they can.

The bushland is dominated by coachwood forest on either side of The Retreat Creek, with drier Angophora (Sydney Red Gum) and eucalypt forest on the upper slopes. The green canopy of Coachwood rainforest makes the Retreat a peaceful place to escape hot summer days.

In some places in the valley there remain signs of the Aboriginal traditional owners from the Camaraigal clan of the Guringai nation, who lived here so long ago. Where the creek meets Sailors Bay is an extensive tidal mudflat area, home to many crabs and fish, fringed by sandstone rocks packed with oysters. The creek has a constant freshwater flow, sometimes just as a trickle in very dry times; thus, these original inhabitants would have found most of their needs in this valley.

The Retreat bushland provides habitat and refuge for a long list of wildlife; native mammals include Echidna, Swamp Wallaby, Long-nosed Bandicoot, Grey-headed Flying

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Morning tea chat is part of Bushcare. Photo Jill Newton

Fox, and micro-bats. Mammals which are not welcome in the Reserve bushland are wandering cats, and uncontrolled dogs. Sadly we often see these.

Reptiles include the Golden-crowned Snake, Diamond Python, Eastern Water Dragon, and beautiful olive-coloured Tree Snakes.

Birds include cute fairy wrens and white-browed scrub wrens, and there are three night birds – the Boobook Owl, Powerful Owl (an endangered species), and Tawny Frogmouth. Most nights, you can hear at least one of these calling. A lyrebird is a regular visitor, and overseas visitors are always delighted to see Kookaburras, and the colourful parrot family – Rainbow

Lorikeets, King Parrots, Crimson Rosellas, Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, and noisy Sulphur-crested Cockatoos.

The Retreat Bushcare Group works to create habitat for native wildlife, targeting weeds, which pose a threat to health and resilience of the native plant community.

The damp gully environment, plus

the proximity of so many neighbouring gardens (there are over 30 direct-neighbour properties of this Reserve) mean that weed invasion is continuing problem. A Bushcare Group's aim is to restore bushland to a self-sustaining condition, and after ten years of regular work, the Reserve is looking so much better, but we still have a way to go. New Bushcare Group members are always welcome; we meet once a month (second Sunday, 9–12) for a pleasant three-hour session, which includes a delicious morning tea in the bush. Council provides our Trainer and work tools. Contacts are in each issue of The Grag.

The Retreat Bushcare Group

WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A NEIGHBOUR OF THE GRIFFIN RESERVES?

- 1 Plant local natives in your garden to extend and connect with the habitat of the bushland.
- 2 Join a local Bushcare Group and learn bushcare techniques by attending Council's regular bushcare training sessions.
- 3 Don't dump garden refuse or plant non-natives in bushland.
- 4 Keep cats out of reserves and dogs on a leash.
- 5 Minimise lightspill pollution from outdoor lights – some creatures such as sugar gliders will avoid lit areas.
- 6 Visit your local bushland and enjoy the quiet refuge it provides.
- 7 For more information about the Griffin Reserves, and to check your nearest Reserve, you can visit Willoughby City Council website, and go to the Griffin Reserves Castlecrag Plan of Management.



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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).

61 Sunnyside Crescent, Castlecrag

Some houses along Edinburgh Road and Sunnyside Crescent have stunning bush and water views to the north. They are magical as you feel as if you are in the Blue Mountains or the Hawkesbury. 61 Sunnyside Crescent is one of these houses.

This house was designed by Harold Smith (1913–2008) in 1948. It is one of four he designed in the street. He worked as a student for Walter Burley Griffin.

In 1974 he formed the architectural practice, Smith Jesse Payne and Hunt. 61 Sunnyside Crescent was Smith's own house and the current owners bought the house from him.

Smith and a friend bought 3 blocks of land in a row in Sunnyside Crescent. They subdivided them into 2 blocks making the footprint of the proposed houses larger for these sites.



The street view of the house is a series of skillion roofs (one way sloping) sitting on a series of face brick walls wrapping around a stone flagged courtyard. There are no windows facing the street making it a very private façade. This is in contrast to the rear of the house which is open with large timber sliding glass doors. The house follows the contours of the site making it split level.

The entry of the house is small and becomes spatially bigger as you walk down the few steps to the living area. From here the large sliding doors open to the magnificent Sugarloaf Mountain valley view. Stretching out from the living room is a broad stone terrace hovering above a large expanse of rock. This forms part of the escarpment which wraps around the northern side of the Castlecrag peninsula.

With the design of this house, Smith included many practical ideas. One of these is the large glazed sliding doors which open to the terrace and are hung from a track in the lintel, so there is no hob or threshold to step over.

He designed the house to be in shade in summer and bring the sun inside in winter. There is an implied hallway located behind the living room (separated by a brick wall which invites you to lean on) which connects the kitchen to the bedrooms.

Smith was an innovative designer. He designed a lot of the joinery in the house such as circular holes as finger pulls (quite common today), and a pull down ironing board housed in a kitchen cupboard. He invented the first security screen door made out of steel mesh by Lysaghts. He embraced the use of glass louvres to induce cross ventilation.



The view of Sugarloaf Mountain through the terrace doors. Photo Lindy Batterham

The house has been added to sympathetically over time without diminishing the original design of the house. Everyone who visits the house wants to live in it! That is how practical and peaceful the house is to live in.

It is lucky 61 Sunnyside Crescent still exists today because in the 1980's it was proposed to build an expressway via a bridge from Seaforth to the northern side of the Castlecrag peninsula. This was to connect to the future Gore Hill Freeway. There was an outcry from the residents and the idea was squashed. The Roads and Traffic Authority (at the time) had bought a corridor of houses and land in other parts of Castlecrag, which linked to the Gore Hill Freeway corridor. Privately owned houses at 59, 61 and 63 Sunnyside Crescent formed part of this corridor and were to be demolished. Fortunately, Harold Smith's innovative architectural ideas have continued living on into the Twenty-First Century.

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Warners Park Community Garden

Take a stroll through Warners Park to see the changing shape and productivity of the community garden.

Five of six main beds have now been raised, complete with framing for netting and water reticulation. A couple of adjoining areas have been paved to serve as solid bases for wick beds and compost bins.

THANK YOU to locals who have taken up the recycling call to contribute fruit and vegetable waste. It's the rich organic composted soil from this waste that feeds and underpins the garden's ongoing health. Keep it coming but please follow the signs indicating where to deposit as there are bush rats nearby that need discouragement!

Over Summer the usual leafy greens flourished (various lettuce varieties, mizuna, rocket) plus radish, cherry tomatoes and Roma tomatoes. Cucumbers



were valiant as were green chillies, snake beans and small eggplants. Winged beans are making a late rally as the warm weather lingers into autumn. The rampant pumpkin foliage eventually delivered four fabulous healthy

pumpkin specimens. We harvested a few golden nuggets too.

Summertime comes with caterpillars and grasshoppers as our nemesis. We don't use pesticides or insecticides, so it's a matter of netting, organic sprays and just picking them off!

From the garden's trees it's been exciting to have tamarillos (sometimes known as tree tomatoes) for the first time. A great low-calorie fruit, high in potassium which doesn't seem to mind growing in a bit of shade. Cherry and pink guavas gave well too. We've been able to taste and share various produce based jams, pickles and chutneys at morning teas.

Hoping to improve yields from our various citrus trees which have been hit with pest infestations.

Longer term crops in the pipeline include garlic, turmeric, strawberries, potatoes, blueberries, brassicas such as broccoli, leek, Chinese celery and beetroot.

As part of Willoughby Council Community Education program we've participated this year in workshops on bed construction, building healthy soils and composting.

Anyone interested is welcome to visit or join us at Community Garden Meets which are now held every Wednesday and Sunday mornings from 9.30am.



Mary Anne VELISCEK – 0430 173 722

CASTLECrag BUSHCARE Meeting Dates

First Monday of the Month

- **Tower Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact: Jocelyn – 0402 158 518
or Lisa – 0404 806 406

First Sunday of the Month

- **Cortile Park Care**
8.30-11.30
Contact: Tim – 0403 883 254

Second Sunday of the Month

- **Gargoyles Bushcare**
9-12noon
Contact: Margaret – 0407 994 230
- **Keep Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact: Matthew – 0408 203 511

Third Sunday of the Month

- **Casement Reserve**
8.30-11.30
Contact: Vick – 0402 325 531
- **Torquay Estate**
9-12noon
Contact: Jo – 0419 234 235
- **Lookout Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact: Jessica – 0431 317 756
or Adrienne – 9298 3761
- **Retreat Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact: Jill – 0428 880 002

Fourth Sunday of the Month

- **Linden Way Reserve**
9-12noon
Contact: WCC – 9777 7875

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Diary Dates • Diary Dates • Diary Dates

Winter Solstice Open Mic

Sunday, 23 June 2:00pm to 4.30pm
Chatswood Library

Are you a writer or poet who would like to bring your work to a wider audience? Or maybe you are interested in listening to a lively afternoon of reading and performing. Book through the library.

Pre-schoolers Bush Scramble

Thursday, 27 June 2019 10:00am to 11:30am
Clive Park, Northbridge

Meet Willow the Whale and learn about some of her friends in the ocean. Explore the bushland and make sandcastles on the beach. This reserve has a steep sloped entrance, so be aware you may need to piggy back your toddler up the hill. Bring your child's snack and a mug for a cuppa.

Bookings: Emma Hayes on 9777 7942 or email bushwalk@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Plastic Free Living and Making Beeswax Wraps

Wednesday, 10 July 2019 6:30pm to 8:30pm
Wednesday, 24 July 2019 10:00am to 12:00pm

Coachwood Room, WCC, 31 Victor Street, Chatswood

Make a positive change in your home by reducing your use of plastic packaging. This practical workshop will look at ways to eliminate plastic from our lives and demonstrate how to make your own washable, freezable and reusable beeswax wraps.

Contact: Tejinder Gill on 9777 1000 or email Env.educators@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Talk with Indigenous language expert, Professor Jakelin Troy

Tuesday, 2 July 2019 7:00pm to 8:00pm

Creator Space, Chatswood Library

Piecing together the remnants of knowledge about the original Sydney Indigenous Languages is one of the many research works Jakelin Troy has undertaken. A linguistic anthropologist and a Ngarigu woman from the Snowy Mountains region of Australia, Jakelin is the author of *The Sydney Language* and director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research at the University of Sydney. Come along for a fascinating insight into local Indigenous languages, past and current Indigenous issues and the importance of keeping languages and stories alive. This event is held as part of 2019 Gai-Mariagal Festival – A celebration of Australia's first peoples Culture and Heritage.

Book online, phone or email emma.hayes@willoughby.nsw.gov.au.

Aboriginal Songlines and the Night Sky

Wednesday, 10 July 2019 6:30pm to 8:00pm
Chatswood Library

For tens of thousands of years, Aboriginals travelled long distances using star maps in the night sky. This rich understanding of the night sky and the strong connection between story and the landscape are expressed in songlines and will be examined in this presentation by anthropologist, archaeologist and astronomer Robert Fuller. Robert has been active in outreach to non-Indigenous communities through lectures and non-academic articles, and was the instigator of the successful documentary on Euahlayi astronomy, *Star Stories of the Dreaming*.

Bookings essential through WCC website or phone the Library.

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.

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