

Weathering the Storm

Mini tornado sweeps through. Story p6.

Back to the Haven

Like coming home for Christmas. Story p8.

Dr Quek Proposes a Compromise

By now most will already be aware that Dr Quek's design competition was won by Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp (FJMT). This design was the first of the three designs at the 20 November meeting and was presented by Richard Francis-Jones, a founding partner of FJMT. You can find the Jurors report and the winning scheme at the Quadrangle website www.quadranglecastlecrag.com.au.

Richard has an international reputation as a designer of public buildings and is perhaps one of the best architects in Australia (see box page 2). His design incorporates many aspects of CastleCrag's landscape and the ideas and design principles of Marion Mahony and Walter Burley Griffin, a view endorsed by the Walter Burley Griffin Society. However, as it stands, the design is outside the controls envisaged in Council's Local Centres Strategy (LCS) which would limit a structure on the site to height of 3 storeys above the level of Edinburgh Rd and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.8 times the site area.

There have been many rumours flying around CastleCrag about whether Dr Quek has sold the Quadrangle and to whom. However, to paraphrase Mark Twain "the report of [Dr Quek's departure] was an exaggeration". He asked FJMT to design



A view of the revised concept for The Quadrangle by fjmt.

a building that would conform with Council's proposed controls. The result is a structure without open space that looks like a massive block house. Dr Quek wants to build an attractive high quality development befitting of the unique and special qualities of the Griffins' CastleCrag.

Dr Quek has proposed a compromise. Originally, he wanted 4 to 5 storeys and an FSR of 2.2. His new proposal is for an FSR of 2.0 with 3 storeys at the Eastern end of the site and 4 towards Eastern Valley Way. In addition, there would be reduced commercial space and the supermarket would stay on the ground level. It may be that the price of a quality design is a

bit more height. The community needs to consider whether a block-like three floors without open space is preferred to a three-four floor, articulated and well-designed building using quality products such as stone and roughly hewn timbers with landscaped open space.

Dr Quek has undertaken to have the model of the new proposal, along with architectural design drawings, on display at the Quadrangle in the coming week. Details overleaf.

In the words of Bob Dylan we should all "Keep our eyes wide, The Chance won't come again".

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NOTICE OF CPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 25 March, 2020 – 8.00pm

Election of Office Bearers 2021 Centenary celebrations discussion

Anne Watson, Curator of Museum of Sydney's CastleCrag Centenary Exhibition will outline her plans. Hear about proposed local projects and events and brainstorm ideas of how to celebrate locally.

Community Centre, The Rampart, CastleCrag

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THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the
Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag NSW 2068

web page:
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emails to the CPA:
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membership renewals to the above address.

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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.

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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

When the plan to develop the Quadrangle emerged two years ago, I was pretty much of the view that any development should not exceed three floors. As Editor of *The Crag*, I have attended meetings with Dr Quek and his team over that period, and with other community representatives have raised issues of concern such as height, bulk, traffic and overdevelopment. We all stressed the uniqueness and importance of Castlecrag as a special heritage suburb.

It was clear all along that Dr Quek wanted to make the scheme work. His first indication that he might consider 'coming down' was when he decided to include two options in his design brief for the Design Competition – a 4 storey and a 5 storey concept.

In response to Council's adoption of the Local Centres Strategy in December, Dr Quek asked FJMT to design a building that complied with these requirements to see what was possible. The best the international award-winning Francis-Jones team could come up with, reflecting the new limits imposed by WCC, was a block

like building with no open space nor set back. I saw the drawings. Ugly as. Even though it's three storeys high, it's not what we want on our corner. Nor was Dr Quek prepared to put his name to such an ordinary development.

So Dr Quek made a further compromise to his original 5 storey plan, and had FJMT adapt their design to see what a combination of 3 and 4 storeys could look like.

From someone who didn't want a big development on the corner, who may have been happy with a tarring up of The Quadrangle, I have to say this new design is an inspiration. World-class design. It reflects the Griffins and Castlecrag! Like Dr Quek, I'm willing to compromise on my original position too, and hopefully, when you are given new information and see the model of the design up in the empty shop in the Quadrangle, you'll be excited too.

Viewing Times:

5pm-7pm Friday 28 February
9am-1pm Saturday 29 February
9am-1pm Sunday 1 March



Richard Francis-Jones

- Approach is "that we should pursue an architecture appropriate to citizens rather than consumers"
- First Australian firm to win World Building of the Year at the World Architecture Festival for the Auckland Art Gallery Toi O Tamaki
- Harry Seidler Award for Commercial Architecture at the Australian National Architecture Awards for Darling Quarter
- Jorn Utzon Award for International Architecture
- Lloyd Rees Award for Excellence in Civic Design
- "Richard Francis-Jones is, in my view, one of the most interesting and accomplished architects this country has produced" – Elizabeth Farrelly

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From the President



Much has happened in Castlecrag since my last report.

The Castlecrag Fair took place on Sunday 20 October and was a great success. There are many people to thank

for their work in making the Fair such a wonderful day, but a special thanks goes to Willoughby Council for their generous grant, without which the Fair would not have been possible.

At the GM, on 20 November the three entrants in the Quadrangle Design competition presented their designs to around 250 local residents including the Mayor and Ward Councillors. Additionally, a group of four local residents (the G4) presented their case for development on the site being no more than three storeys above Edinburgh Rd.

Following discussion, the G4 asked that a motion be put to the meeting to have their document, the Castlecrag Local Centre Master Plan Principles, incorporated into the Council's Local Centres Strategy (LCS). CPA agreed to the motion being put, on the proviso that it was not to be considered a formal motion of CPA members. On a show of hands, there were more in favour of the motion than against, but not by a great margin.

Minutes of the meeting and G4's document can be found on CPA's website castlecrag.org.au. At Council's December meeting the LCS was adopted incorporating the 3-storey limit sought by the G4. The full text of the LCS is available at the Council's website www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au.

In other developments, the future of the Council carpark, on the corner of The Postern and Eastern Valley Way has been a hot topic on the street. Council's LCS includes a plan to rezone the carpark as Public Open Space and turn it into a small landscaped park. Before this happens, there will be a period of community consultation. Some people love the idea but others are concerned about the loss of parking spaces. We are hopeful that a workable compromise can be reached.

Our AGM will be held on Wednesday evening of 25 March and we are more than pleased to be able to hold the meeting back

at the Castlecrag Community Centre. All committee positions are up for re-election. If you wish to nominate, and you are a member of at least 2 months standing, you should fill out the nomination form, on our website, and return it to CPA. Nominations close on Friday 13 March.

Following the election of the Committee for the next year, we will re-convene with members of the Griffin Society and the Conservation Society to discuss preparations for the centenary of Griffin's Castlecrag in 2021. All welcome! I look forward to seeing you there.

Paul Stokes



The Bowling Club was overflowing with interested residents at the CPA meeting

Community Dinner at Motzas

Readers may recall in the last Crag that the Progress Association invited residents to a community dinner late last year to mark the 94th Anniversary of the Association. Just under 60 diners took up the invite and mingled in the outside area of Motzas on a warm November eve, meeting new and familiar neighbours over a cool prosecco or mineral water. The basement of the Griffin Centre was the birthplace of the CPA all those years ago.

Inside was set up with long communal tables. Tasty Antipasto platters appeared while conversations continued until heritage architect Scott Robertson was invited up as Guest Speaker to recount the history of the Griffin Centre. Scott also

showed images collected for the detailed study he undertook of the building's heritage. The study strongly supports the notion that the Griffin Centre should be granted heritage status as part of the Local Centres Strategy.

Plentiful pizzas were passed around until all were sated. The toppings were delicious and the pizza dough sublime. Richard, Motza's owner, says the dough proves over 48 hours which makes all the difference, then the special Motza oven gives the crust that wonderful texture and taste.

The evening ended with refreshing gelato, good cheer, comradery and the affirmation that the CPA anniversary community dinner should be an annual event.



From The Mayor



Local Centres Strategy

Following two years of careful analysis and consultation with the community the Willoughby Local Centres Strategy was supported by

Council at the 9 December meeting.

I am aware that the height of a potential future development of the Quadrangle site was controversial, and proved to be a critical issue for our community. Ultimately, I believe a position has been reached where essential growth can be accommodated while local character is protected.

The plan for Castlecrag included the idea of a new park on the current Council carpark at the junction of Edinburgh Road and The Postern; this concept has been supported. The process, which is likely to be a lengthy one, will be worked through in coming months. In the shorter term, Council is exploring a community 'pop-up park' to celebrate the Griffin Centenary in November 2021.

Bushcare

Thankfully the recent rain has brought some relief from the severe drought.

The unprecedented weather conditions including the November severe storm have had a big impact in Castlecrag, requiring major clean-up work. Thank you for your patience during the clean up. As you can imagine with over 900 trees down it was a major operation requiring liaison with many different agencies.

Council has worked closely with fire authorities over many years to plan and carry out bushland management. Council is a member of a regional Bush Fire Risk Management Committee, which develop plans co-ordinated by Fire and Rescue NSW. Hazard reduction burns in October reduced fire risk in the Castlecrag Northern Escarpment and in Castlehaven Reserve and manual fuel removal was carried out at priority sites such as The Rampart, The Barquette and Rockley Street.

For more information visit the Rural Fire Service's Bushfire Survival Plan at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au. In the event of an emergency call 000 or for SES help call 132 500.

To be part of supporting our bushland, consider joining one of the Bushcare groups active in Castlecrag. Call Monique on 9777 7875 for more information.

Stoker Playground

Following community consultation, the Stoker Playground Improvement Plan

was adopted at the 9 December Council meeting. Construction of the playground renewal will start in early February and be staged to allow access to parts of the playground and foreshore. New features include a hill slide, timber boat climbing structure, extension of the concrete trike track and two new picnic settings.

Edinburgh Road parking

Council has observed that vehicles are frequently parking in the new no parking zone on the south side of Edinburgh Road, east of Eastern Valley Way outside The Quadrangle. The no parking zone is from 7am to 9.30pm, Monday to Friday to provide additional road capacity at the busy intersection during peak periods. Parking in this location during no parking times increases delays for drivers leaving Castlecrag. The change in parking conditions was a Roads and Maritime Services requirement for the installation of the new green arrow at the intersection.

Council rangers are monitoring the no parking area and will be enforcing parking restrictions.

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



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Get Fitter with Litter – Adopt a street and keep it neat!

Northbridge resident Don Wilson was becoming increasingly disturbed by the amount of plastic entering our oceans and waterways, so he started *Winning the War on Waste* and a program called *Get Fitter with Litter*, which has taken off nationally. His dedication over many years to environmental preservation and, more recently, to the war on waste has been duly recognised with Willoughby's 2020 Environmental Citizen of the Year Award.

Don is of the belief that, aside from Tossers, most people like to see their street free of litter. However, only a few people pick it up. Others just take it as a part of modern life & don't take any notice of it.

Much of street litter ends up in the rivers, creeks and oceans. In Castlecrag, the stormwater flows from the gutters into the creeks, then into Sugarloaf & Sailors Bay. Animals, birds & fish think the plastic is food. It kills them and their chicks. Whole species have become extinct. Even the fish we eat today can contain tiny traces of plastic!

Imagine if we joined Don's initiative and adopted our own street (or part of the longer ones) and committed to keeping it clear of plastic and other waste. A tiny effort for a massive result. There are a few people in our suburb already doing this, and a co-ordinated effort will be more effective.

THE MISSION

Use less plastic

Why is plastic harmful?

Plastic never goes away
Plastic affects human health
Plastic spoils our groundwater
Plastic attracts other pollutants
Plastic threatens wildlife
Plastic piles up in the environment
Plastic poisons our food chain
Plastic costs billions to abate

If you don't want to formally "adopt a street", take a bag when you're out for your walk, with or without a dog. There's a tribe of walkers in Castlecrag who pound the streets, bush tracks and waterways. Or you can get fit by dedicating short times to power walking, plogging* or following the fast fitness program while picking up the odd bit of litter.

As Don says enthusiastically "It's taking off like a Ferrari."

Adopt a Street today and together, as a community, we can free our streets and waterways of litter. Register the street/ reserve/waterway you are adopting at getfitterwithlitter.org.

*plogging = jogging and picking up litter

Research published in 2014 estimated that at least 5.25 trillion plastic particles are currently floating in the world's oceans... It has been estimated that there are up to 150 million tonnes of plastic in the oceans; in comparison, there are an estimated 800 million tonnes of fish in the ocean.

(NSW Parliamentary Research Service: Pollution in Sydney Harbour: sewage, toxic chemicals and microplastics Briefing Paper No 03/2015)

In 2014, researchers from the Sydney Institute of Marine Science found "alarming" levels of microplastic pollution in Sydney Harbour.

(NSW Parliamentary Research Service: Pollution in Sydney Harbour: sewage, toxic chemicals and microplastics Briefing Paper No 03/2015)

Update on Griffin Pathway between The Scarp and The Bulwark

As advised in the last issue of *The Crag*, Council has declined to carry out any work at this time to improve the accessibility of this useful route between The Scarp and The Bulwark.

Nonetheless, supporters of the pathway report that it is passable and that people are using it regularly.



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No Storm in a Teacup!

Whether you weathered the storm or came home to witness its destruction, the mini tornado which hit parts of Sydney on Tuesday 26 November is one we'll all remember for a long time to come. Tens of thousands of households lost power as a result of the fierce winds and rain, including hundreds of houses in Castlecrag. Dozens of trees were uprooted, split or had huge branches ripped or twisted off. Some of these branches landed on roofs and roads, brought down power lines, while others balanced precariously over the lines, creating danger below.

Some homes lost power for up to 6 days. People lost the contents of their fridges and ate their take-away dinners by candlelight, or under solar powered Christmas lights.

Emergency at KU Castlecrag

Director of KU Castlecrag Nicole Farelly, recounted the kindergarten children's experience. "It began luckily when the children were all inside their rooms eating lunch about 12.45pm. We immediately moved all children and adults away from the windows as they shuddered and shook. We lost power but luckily have back up emergency lighting so it was not too dark. When the mini tornado had subsided, the educators looked outside and immediately noticed that we had the big liquid amber tree branches down on our powerlines which had come away from the building and were entangled around our metal fencing. We immediately went into critical incident mode and began with 000. It took us 25 mins to get put through to the Fire service who responded within about 10mins of receiving our emergency. They assisted in us securing a safe evacuation

through our neighbour's place at 14 The Postern where we slowly and meticulously ferried the children out in groups of 2 to parents who had been notified to collect from our neighbour's front lawn. The preschool was then closed for 4 days due to lack of power. As we are at the end of the grid and lines, we were seen by Ausgrid last. Parents were not charged fees for the centre closure and the community were very understanding of the disaster zone that was our local community."

A number of roads were blocked, including Eastern Valley Way between Edinburgh Road and Sunnyside Crescent. A huge Angophora was uprooted and fell across the western side of the road. Afternoon peak-hour traffic coming from the city was diverted through the lights and down Raeburn Avenue to Sunnyside, in order to get around the fallen tree. Edinburgh road was also closed at Raeburn. Buses, trucks and a never-ending line of cars jammed down the narrow avenue.

Local homes sustained considerable damage

Octogenarian Alison Winter moved into her Edinburgh Road home with her late husband Lesley as a newlywed sixty years

ago. She was in the kitchen with her gardener Richard Blacklock, when a huge eucalypt branch from the next door garden came crashing down onto the roof above them. It broke the roof structure and many tiles. Within minutes she had neighbours coming to her aid, for which she is ever grateful. Alison was understandably in shock for some time. Apart from removing



Power and trees down in The Parapet

Angophora down



Dangling limbs on Edinburgh Road near Charles Street



Damaged house in The Bulwark



No Storm in a Teacup cont...



The Winter house in Edinburgh Road



The house with no roof in Sunnyside Crescent

the offending limb, they were able to secure a tarp over the damaged corner of the house. Another neighbour helped her with the insurance company dealings, who were quick to come out and assess the damage. Asbestos was found in the roof, which took two and a half months to remove. Like Alison's, there are a number of local homes that are still under tarps nearly three months after the event.

A family in Sunnyside Crescent still don't have a roof! The babysitter returned home to find the entire roof off! Half was in the backyard of an Edinburgh road house, and

the rest was next door. Only the dogs were at home when it happened and although frightened, were safe. The family was also supported in their time of need. More than 30 neighbours came to help clean up & pack their belongings, secure temporary tarps and offer dry accommodation. Work has still not commenced on their repair – the insurance company says they are not a high priority! Meanwhile, they continue to be displaced and look forward to the day they'll be back in their home.

Out the front, a car was crushed when a stand of very old conifers were blown

down, blocking the street until neighbours and tradies working nearby got their saws out to remove the fallen trees. Down the road, another car had a big limb fall on top of it. A man who parked at the shops was just about to get out when a power line came crashing down onto the car. Fortunately, he knew that he'd be safe as long as he stayed put until the line was removed. If he had got out and touched the ground, he would have been fried.

Miraculously, there have been no reports of anyone being injured in The Storm. For that we can be thankful!



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Happenings down in the Haven



Carols

The amphitheatre filled to capacity for the return of Carols at the Haven on December 14 2019. People had to be turned away at the steps, but were still able to listen and join in the singing from up in the Barricade and Scarp. For the first time, the event was organised by Willoughby Council's Events team, rather than the volunteer Haven committee who previously managed & produced all events. Despite the lack of a stage, the team did a great job in bringing this much treasured tradition back into our community. The gully that was once spanned by the stage had new fencing installed, keeping the boundaries defined. For all concerned it was a matter of "work with what you've got to make this event happen for the community!"

And happen it did, to the delight of those early birds who found themselves a cushioned seat on the historic western terraces. Mayor Gail welcomed the crowd and expressed delight at being back at the Haven. Kitty Hopwood was a wonderful host on the night, sharing her rise through the ranks of Carols at the Haven from being an audience member as a babe in arms, to a shepherd in the Nativity play complete with tea towel for headgear, then to candle seller and usher, then back on stage as Christmas Fairy and Santa's Second In Charge. Kitty handled her new role as host with great skill, weaving the Choir, Carols, audience and Santa together with professionalism, humour and warmth.



The Local Vocals choir were perched on the rock ledges on the other side of the creek to the audience, as was the case in Marion Mahony's day back in the 1930's. The choir, led by Louise McDonald, did a wonderful job leading the community Carol singing and by all accounts had great fun too. For those interested in joining this local choir, they meet on Tuesday evening in the Northbridge Library. Phone Louise on 0452 006 693

The overall feeling was that it was an absolute pleasure to be coming together back in the Haven amongst the trees, rocks, wildlife and fern trees. As night fell and the lights came up it looked truly magical and reminded one of times past.

Some people have lamented that Carols is no longer held on Christmas Eve, which had become their family tradition, but given this was a Council-run event, it would not be reasonable to expect staff to work on Christmas Eve. It was different when community volunteers chose to do so. The reality is that since the demolition of the old stage, a whole new regime has had to come into being. Council has got

the message that the community would like Carols to return as an annual event, but even stronger than that is the desire for a stage to be rebuilt for ongoing performances throughout the year!

Stakeholder Reference Group

In November 2019, Council called for expressions of interest for a Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) to provide input into the development of a new standalone Plan of Management for the Haven Amphitheatre which sits within the Castlehaven Reserve. The brief given to the SRG was "to consider the Haven Amphitheatre and the location's importance for environmental conservation, heritage and culture."

The group met four times over November and December. It was composed of:

- A representative from each of the following community groups:
 - Walter Burley Griffin Society – Margaret Petrykowski
 - Castlecrag Progress Association – John Steel

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Happenings down in the Haven cont...



- Friends of the Haven – Glen Gulliver
- Haven Amphitheatre Management Committee – Richard Newton
- Castlecrag Conservation Society – Mark Crew
- Willoughby Environmental Protection Association – Isabelle Connolly
- 4 community representatives – Bruce Wilson, Richard Blacklock, Matthew Keighery and Lindy Batterham (all but Matthew were also members of the former Haven Amphitheatre

Management Committee).

The SRG agreed that the overall vision was for a low maintenance and cost-effective performance and activity space, that will serve the current community and future generations, whilst conserving the natural and cultural heritage of the site.

The Stage

One of the key issues all members of the SRG agreed upon was that that they do not want to see accessibility ramps installed in the gully as is planned in the current

approved DA. It is believed that this would damage the natural environment and destroy the unique performance space in the bushland setting.

With a new structure comes the need to comply with regulations related to access and building codes, which evoke the ramps, platforms and disabled toilet. It seems the only way a stage can be rebuilt without these structures, is to have a stage or platform of a certain size, with no undercroft area for storage, performer's toilet, fridge or sink. This is how the amphitheatre was from 1976 – 1992, before the undercroft was built by volunteer labour. Unless exemptions through heritage status can be invoked, it seems this is what it may now have to come down to.

There is still quite some way to go with getting the Haven stage back, but progress is being made.



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Wonderful weather for a Fabulous Fair



By many accounts, Castlecrag's Community Fair last October was the best one yet! People commented on the pleasant ambience or 'vibe' on the day and stayed longer than they had planned. The live music in the lower carpark was a major contributor to this, as was having Motza's Pizzas and the Scout's Sausage sizzle around the seating area under the shade of the marquee.

Up on the road, the cafes were doing good business while Apera and Castlecrag Meats played duelling barbeques offering tasty treats to passers-by. There were over 40 stallholders including local schools, community organisations, individuals and small businesses. A sustainability theme emerged, with a number of women selling their pre-loved clothing and homewares. KU Castlecrag sold quality second-hand

toys while CPA continued the tradition of a mammoth second-hand book stall. Thanks to all those who donated.

Animal lovers were treated to a free petting farm animal pen, courtesy of the Quadrangle. In the afternoon, a Wildlife show up under the big Melaleuca Tree in Cortile Reserve drew a good crowd. The audience was entranced by being able to pat the python and crocodile!

Willoughby Public School students showed off their musical talent by busking in the Quadrangle. It's wonderful to see the local primary school fostering a music program that builds confidence and skills in our young people. Their involvement was greatly appreciated as they added to the ambience at the Quadrangle end of The Fair.

Thanks go to Northside Radio, who

advertised the Fair in the lead up, and then produced an entertaining live outside broadcast on the day, which included interviews with representatives from all the local groups. This added another dimension to the Fair. It was quite special to have them along.

The raffle was a great success, thanks to the ticket sellers and the enticing prizes. Local restaurants Bai Yok, Cento22, Apera, Bistro Mekong, Martha's and Motza Pizza each generously offered a \$150 voucher for the CPA to raffle. Bai Yok gave two! The money raised helped to pay for the unexpected cost of traffic controllers that the regulations required us to have.

There was a wonderful showcase of volunteer local musicians who entertained the crowds all day. The first was talented 10 year old classical guitarist Arthur



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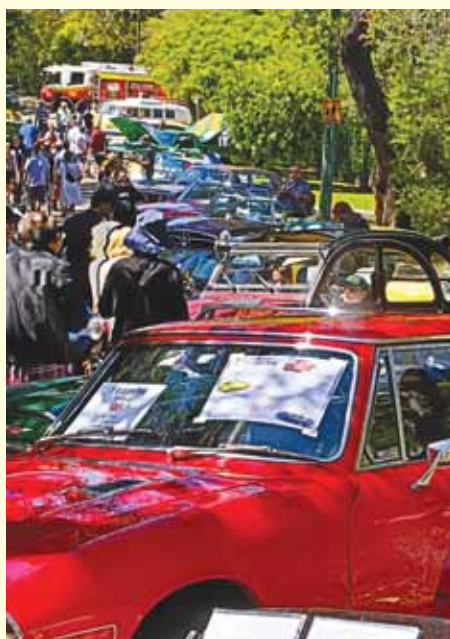
Wonderful weather for a Fabulous Fair cont...



Lusher, and the last was the fabulous Anna Weaving Collective, who played on and on and had people dancing in the carpark and street!

However, the highlight would have to have been the Classic Car Display, a popular new addition created by local car enthusiast, Scott Graham. Thanks go to those in The Parapet & Postern who allowed their driveways to be blocked for the duration and recognised it was for the good of the community! Scott's report appears below.

For the coordinator, it was nine months of hard work, and although vowing afterwards never to do it again, it may be like childbirth and as time passes, one forgets the hard labour and pain, and decides, with enthusiasm to go again in two years' time. Next fair however, we'll



be calling on a bigger committee and more hands to share the load. It's only Fair!

Classic Car Display

The Classic Car Display went off, with 22 cars on display from Citroens to Jaguars and even exotics like a Jensen Interceptor and a Riley 2.5 present. The visitors were great – very enthusiastic about the cars – lots of questions, compliments and some fun stories to tell. From an older lady who'd been romanced in an MGTF, a mysterious French lady with 2CV tales, a bloke who remembered putting 4 people in a two seater sprite and the little girl whose



dream car was "Little Miss Sunshine", Paul's yellow Kombi.

The visitor of the day was a car enthusiast who travelled all the way from Merrylands after hearing our interview on Northside Radio. He is restoring a Karman Ghia and walked each of us individually through his journey.

The highlight for me was taking that little girl for a spin in Miss Sunshine. We owners had a ball and if we're wanted, we will be back with some fresh cars next fair. Special thanks to the gents for the trust shown in offering their cars for display and for hanging around for the day to chat. Ed O'Grady, Peter Dooley, Paul Hutton, William Pape, Stephen Richardson, Malcolm Graham, Mike Selby, Tim Benfield, Drew Kelton, Andrew Davis, Bob St Clair, John Ferris, Andrew Fraser, Tony Wellbelove, Paul Borrud and David Withers.

Scott Graham

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Dave Bull: guitar
Nick Fadeev: drums, backing vocals

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Victoria Blacklock 29 December 1961 – 10 December 2019

My sister Victoria, the first-born of the late David and Beverley Blacklock, passed away recently. Though no longer a resident of Castlecrag, Victoria felt a special connection to the place she was born into and which nurtured her as a child and through to adulthood.

The Blacklocks have had an unbroken relationship with the suburb since the 1950's. Our grandparents purchased a single triangular block stretching from the beginning of Linden Way to the Tip of Cheyne Walk and back to where the two roads meet, progressively naming & building these roads and three houses over some years, including "Penhallow" at 16 Linden Way. Victoria enjoyed swimming in the saltwater pool and playing in the bushland.

Our family first lived in Cheyne Walk before building a house at No 8 The Tor Walk in 1972. During the 70's and 80's, the Blacklock home with its native plant nursery was a focal point for many local residents who were beginning to understand, with

Beverley's enthusiasm, the importance and value of planting stock that is endemic to this area. It was a fun and nurturing place and Victoria often led that fun.

All those close to Victoria were touched by her enthusiasm, unique humour and passion. Her farewell ceremony was held in Cheyne Walk, with her close friends and family in attendance. People spoke of her energy, her great love of nature and an eclectic taste in music, especially David Bowie. Victoria had a lifelong interest in astrology and a deep love of animals, in particular dogs.

As for many people in the community, complex mental health issues changed Victoria's life as they did the life of our family.

Her ashes were released onto the Beverley Blacklock Reserve which was named to honour the environmental efforts of our mother. As her ashes were dispersed, David Bowie played and many tears were shed, but there was peace for Victoria.



Victoria with rescue dog Mafia on the now Burrubru Reserve Castlecrag looking over Sailor's Bay – a place she loved to be. 1980

Richard Blacklock

Joan Elizabeth Gibson 28 August 1928 – 25 January 2020



Joan Gibson died peacefully in Garrick House, St Ives on Saturday 25th January 2020, following a decline in her health over the preceding 3 years.

Joan had lived at 1 The Rampart, Castlecrag since 1953 when she and her beloved husband John bought it as a vacant block of land. They initially built a modest brick home, then extended several times as their family expanded.

4 children arrived between 1955 and 1964: Andrew, Georgina, Ken, and Malcolm. Their 4 children went on to provide them 12 grandchildren.

Joan was actively involved in maintaining the Lookout Reserve near her home and other reserves of native bush in Castlecrag. She loved her own native garden and spend

many hours each day looking after it.

Her childhood years were spent in Crookwell, NSW, where her father, Arthur Kerr, was a GP. Tragically he died aged 32 when Joan was 3 years old, leaving behind Joan and her 2 older siblings. They moved with her mother Marjorie Kerr to Wollstonecraft to live with her maternal grandparents.

Joan attended high school at SCEGGS Moss Vale as a boarder, then Sydney University where she completed a Bachelor of Science degree. At university she met her husband John Gibson and they married in England in 1951.

Joan worked as a scientist in the pathology departments of several hospitals before her children arrived. Once there were young children to look after she worked for a local pathologist reading cytology slides from her dining table at home. As the 4 children grew up she commenced work teaching science subjects at Sydney University and the UNSW, which she enjoyed immensely.

After retirement Joan and John enjoyed considerable travel but their passion was sailing. They took up sailing in their 30's and sold their last yacht after they were 80. Sailing became a huge family affair, owning and sailing on many different boats over the decades. Their favorite anchorage was Sugarloaf Bay, where they often rafted up with their mates, to the chorus of sulphur

crested cockatoos and kookaburras. When they weren't there they could often be found raiding the Sydney Fish Markets with their flotilla of yachts and going ashore for a big BBQ near Glebe.

Joan was an educated, well-informed lady, with a wicked love of a good argument. She would stage a rollicking good "discussion" at any opportunity...right to the end.

She held strong opinions and had no hesitation in voicing them. She lobbied politicians and decision makers on social and environmental concerns before it was commonplace.

Joan loved loud classical music and good literature. She was a creative modern cook, making delicious meals for many lucky folk, accompanied by good wine and an argument on the side.

Joan's delightful neighbors were very attentive and kind, especially after John's death in July 2017. The secure, thoughtful community in Castlecrag allowed Joan to stay in her home until her 91st birthday.

Her family will sadly miss Joan and their visits to 1 The Rampart, Castlecrag. It is hard to imagine anyone who has loved Castlecrag more than Joan Gibson who called it home for almost 60 years.

Rest in Peace Joan Gibson.

Georgina Gibson

The House with the View

27 Linden Way, Castlecrag

27 Linden Way, Castlecrag was bought as an original house with expansive views to the Pacific Ocean, Powder Hulk Bay, The Spit, Seaforth, Clontarf, Beauty Point, Mosman, Cremorne, Northbridge and Sailors Bay.

The brief for the designer, Stephen Collins, was to maximise the views from the site and provide a relaxing feel in the house. The house is over three levels with the top two levels orientated to the view.

All elements of the house were designed as a whole, the exterior, interior and some of the furniture. The exterior is designed as a 3-dimensional sculpture to be viewed not only from the outside but also from the terraces above.

The exterior of the house is layered starting with the lowest level treating it as a textured base clad in dry stone basalt (carparking, storage and guest quarters). The middle level was treated as a smooth skin of painted cement render continuing the dark grey colour scheme of the basalt (living, dining, kitchen, study, bedroom, and bathroom). The top layer is a predominant glass box clad in grey zinc (main bedroom, walk-in robe and ensuite). Timber decks are located on the top two levels.

Water plays an important role in the design of the house from the surrounding water bodies to the fish pond and a reflecting pool. Wrapping around the footprint of the rear of the house is a fish pond which demarcates the outside from the inside. The shallow reflecting pool is adjacent to the ensuite on the top level. It reflects the nearby trees onto the water's surface.

Whilst the exterior is treated as different layers, for the interior, continuity was maintained throughout by using the same materials for different uses. The floor finish is a pale grey Verdara limestone and or Blackbutt timber throughout the house. The joinery, stairs, front door, battened timber and screens are American Oak. The ceiling timber battens are Western Red Cedar. This ceiling hides acoustic ceiling tiles to cut down noise from the hard surfaces.

Visual connections were made with the continuity of finishes and between the internal spaces to generate a relaxed feeling in the house. To help this feeling of spaciousness and openness, some rooms do not even have doors which generates



an open feel to the whole house.

To enhance a feeling of openness and the connection between the interior and exterior are the floor to ceiling sliding glazed doors that when opened disappear into wall cavities so there is no barrier to the outside.

Furniture was designed for specific locations in the house. The dining table was made from Wenge timber, side tables from American Walnut and a study desk from New Guinea Rosewood. The copper hooded fireplace is also a 3 dimensional form hiding the television behind sliding screens.

This house is a statement of well designed architecture that meets the client's expectations and is a joy to live in.

Ben Gerstel

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Warners Park Community Garden



There's no doubt the defining aspect of Summer 2020 in the community garden has been the extraordinary weather. An already extended drought morphed into an unthinkable long one. It's been a season marked with sweltering heat, all too often smoky air from sometimes far-away bushfires and a wind-storm that swept limbs from trees in *The Crag* with a vengeance. Mercifully the garden in the valley weathered that wind-storm remarkably well.

In December 2019 level 1 water restrictions were upped to level 2 water restrictions. With this, the overhead spraying set-up on several of our raised beds was altered to a drip feed system and an extra morning of watering introduced for the many remaining areas of the garden which still need to be watered with a watering can, as seen above being done by Siwa, photograph by Jutta Von dem Bussche.

In harvest terms, we've enjoyed great purple king climbing beans, broad beans,

winged beans, snow peas, rainbow chard, kale, Cavolo Nero, cucamelons, herbs, mizuna and lettuce. Currently there's thai pea eggplants, a few okra and zucchinis, but an absolute abundance of cucumbers (Marketmore and Suvo Long Cucumbers) along with plenty of cherry tomatoes and chillis. Our scarlett runner beans give reality to those images of Jack and the Beanstalk reaching for the sky. The scarlett coloured flowers on them are fabulous although (so far) edible beans are sparse. Presently we're maintaining what we already have growing and watching the weather – new planting is restricted.

In the fruit department our mulberry tree delivered well, a few cape gooseberries are fruiting and the tamarillo tree is laden with ripening egg-shaped fruit. It may even be overlaid as some unripe fruits are unexpectedly dropping! Our strawberry patch came up with luscious looking large leaves, but few berries.

In other news, we're working on growing

a new generation of gardeners by making a raised mini-vegie garden for children. Our Christmas gathering had a great turn up with two more Castlecrag residents, Queenie and Sun-Lim, joining us to bring the Castlecrag contingent at the garden up to five.

If you're able to give an hour or so to help with watering on (non-rainy) Wed, Fri or Sunday mornings from 8.30 -10am, consider yourself invited to join David (Wed & Sun) or Mary Anne (Fri). This is a task suitable for all fitness levels... someone can fill the cans while a partner empties.

Compost bins continue to be available in the garden for fruit and vegetable contributions – please cut up organic matter into small pieces and read the signs indicating where to deposit. Extra attention to composting and soil is proving to be well worth the effort.

Mary Anne VELISCEK – 0430 173 722

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Casement Reserve Bushcare group

Much like the bordering Bastion, Barbette and Redoubt, the Casement Reserve joins other Castlecrag streets to make up yet another part of our castle. However, rather than being 'a vaulted bomb-proof accommodation for troops, stores or guns', our



Casement provides a haven for a range of native flora, wildlife and a dedicated Bushcare group.

The Casement reserve is a small rectangular area, circa 0.7 hectares (1¾ acres) of ridge top sandstone about 120m above sea level. It can be readily accessed from both the Redoubt and Barbette turning circles. There is a circuit path which we encourage walkers to stick to to avoid trampling any new seedlings.

Bushcarers have been tending to the reserve on the third Sunday morning of each month since about 1999 and a lot has changed in this time. Gone are bin loads of asparagus fern, fishbone fern, tradescantia and many other weeds. Like many other places in Castlecrag, the Casement has seen its share of 'dumping' but thankfully many residents are involved with caring for the reserve and nowadays instruct their builders/workmen/gardeners not to get rid of their rubbish there. Having said that, we still have far too many weeds – ehrhata and other seasonal exotic grasses and the ever thriving mother of millions – keeping our small team busy throughout the year.

Controlled burns on site (2000, 2002 & 2005) have encouraged regeneration of indigenous species including acacia and kunzea. Careful propagation of local species (most recently Dodanea (hop bush), Hakea and Eucalyptus Hispida) and periodic

planting of council supplied plants have added to the site's diversity. The recent dry spell is testing the small zieria grove and the birdsnest ferns. Even the tough lomandra longifolia is struggling.

Although we haven't done a fauna audit, we have seen a lot of wildlife over the years. As well as the usual blue tongue lizards and water dragons, there are frogs and snakes (yes – I've personally seen a red belly black sunning itself on one of our larger rocks and have disturbed a golden crown snake when moving a large dead branch whilst trying to redefine a footpath and you guessed it – we decided that we liked the path where it was). We also have an abundance of possums, kookaburras and periodically bush turkeys. Group members have spotted an echidna and a Lyrebird nearby in the past 12 months and there is much evidence of bandicoots. During our September session, a pair of King Parrots visited us when we broke for morning coffee.

Casement Bushcare attendance ranges from between 4 and 10 each month. Around 11am we enjoy the shade provided by the mature exotic Kaffir Plum at the Redoubt entrance and the best bushcare morning coffee in the area. Come along and see us sometime – we welcome new members and Council provides tools and excellent training.

Vicki Craig

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

- Gargoyle 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: Adrienne – 0409 997 076
- Retreat Reserve
9-12noon
Contact: Jill – 0428 880 002

Fourth Sunday of the Month

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

Zachary Zeus
Principal Consultant | Managing Director



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Wildlife sightings



Above: Male Lyrebird putting on a display.

Below: An echidna heading for Edinburgh Road.



Apart from the wallabies and lace monitors, an increasing number of echidna and lyrebird sightings have been recorded on both sides of the peninsula over summer. Lyrebirds have an extraordinary

vocal range and are famously accomplished mimics with their own lush, ringing calls mingled with impersonations of their avian neighbours. You might think you're hearing a kookaburra but it could be an lyrebird. They have been known to mimic chain saws, car alarms and even camera shutters

Diary Dates • Diary Dates

Clean Up Australia Day

Sunday, 8 March 2020

1pm to 3pm

Warners Park

Please note deferred date from 1 March. Meet at playground.

Contact: Grant Sheldon 0417 497 034.



STEP UP TO CLEAN UP

Willoughby Environment Protection Association AGM

Tuesday, March 17 7.00pm

Glenaeon Hall

After the Fires - What Next?

Speaker Gary Dunnett, CEO of NPA (National Parks association) and former Sydney Region Manager for NPWS.

All welcome. Supper provided.

The Griffins' Castlecrag Heritage Walk

Saturday 2 May 10am to 12.30pm

To celebrate this year's Heritage Festival and its theme of 'Our Heritage for the Future', the Walter Burley Griffin Society has organised a guided tour led by landscape architect James Smallhorn. It will meander through Sydney's original bushland estate revealing the restoration efforts that have taken place on some of the unique Griffin house exteriors, reserves and landscapes and how they have stood the test of time.

Bookings essential: <https://www.trybooking.com/BIEYG>

Adult \$20; Concession/Student \$15; Child \$0, Family \$40

Please bring hat, walking shoes and water.

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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