



CASTLECRAG
PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION

THE CRAG

A voice for the community since 1925

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MAY 2020

Sitting on the rock of the Bay

I see fire and I see shark. Story p6.

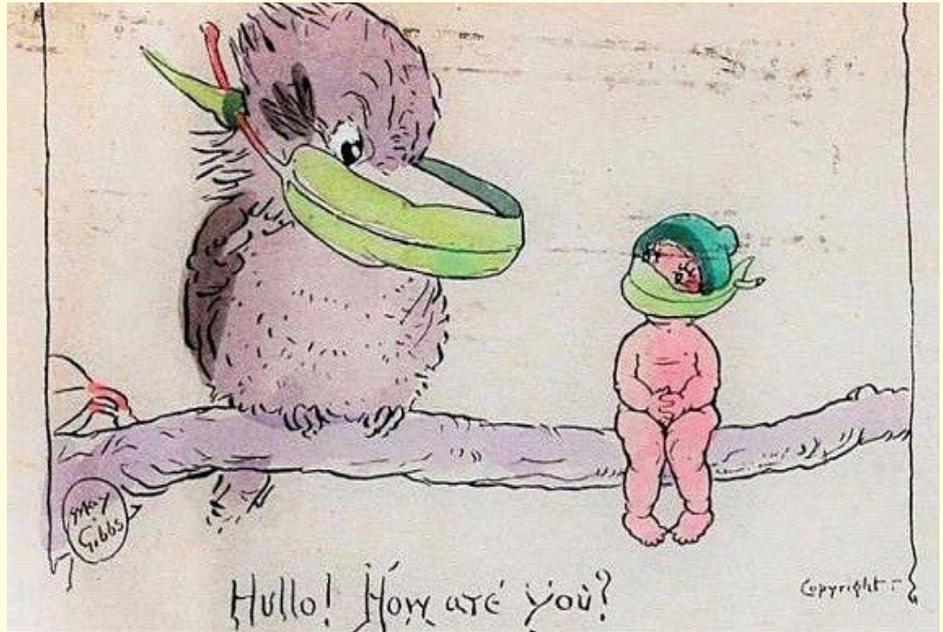
Skeletons of Sugarloaf

Bringing comedy and cheer. Story p7.

Lockdown in the Crag

The word that best describes the leadup to and first half of 2020 would have to be UNPRECEDENTED! I'm sure we're all sick of hearing it, but it does ring true. From the drought and subsequent water restrictions to the horrendous bushfires to the north, south and west of us creating smoke-filled days over Summer, to the outbreak of Covid 19, it's been a tough time for many people.

Here on the peninsula (with our Morotai and Sugarloaf Crescent fingers) there is a notion of feeling very grateful for living where we do. Compared to the rest of the world, we are doing exceptionally well. Compared to Sydneysiders who live in high rise or inner city with no garden or outlook but high walls, we are blessed. We can freely walk our streets and bush tracks. We have 8 local restaurants and cafes still serving us with a mix of delicious take-aways and home deliveries. How good is that! For the children, households have embraced the 'teddy in the window' concept which has brought joy to many. Whilst acknowledging that there must be people locally who have lost their jobs, there is much to feel grateful for. In this special online *Corona Crag* you can read about what some of our neighbours have been getting up to during lockdown.



This government public health campaign poster was illustrated by May Gibbs in 1919 during the Spanish Flu pandemic from which an estimated 13,000 Australians died.

May Gibbs (1877–1969) is one of Australia's most treasured illustrators, artists and children's authors. Her bush fantasy world has captured the imaginations of Australians for over a century, creating a uniquely Australian folklore that holds a special place in the hearts of a nation.

May Gibbs left a lasting legacy to thousands of children and adults with disability. Upon her death in 1969, May

Gibbs left the copyright of all her works jointly to The NSW Society for Crippled Children (now known as Northcott) and the Spastic Centre of NSW (now known as Cerebral Palsy Alliance). We appreciate permission to publish this image. The generosity of May Gibbs will continue to assist the works of these charitable organisations through the royalties on sales of May Gibbs books and associated products: <https://maygibbs.org/shop/>.

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POSTPONEMENT OF CPA GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the CPA has been postponed until further notice due to Covid-19.

Members will be advised by email.

We hope to take up the planned discussion regarding 2021 Centenary of Griffin's Castlecrag and hear from Anne Watson, Curator of Museum of Sydney's Castlecrag Centenary Exhibition, which has also been postponed to a later date.

THINK LOCALLY!

SHOP LOCALLY!

EMPLOY LOCALLY!

THE CRAG

is the community newsletter of the Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag NSW 2068

web page:
www.castlecrag.org.au

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

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

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Stuart Frith
Matthew Keighery
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Hugh Stowe
- 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.

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Disclaimer

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

From the Editor

When the decision was made not to publish a print version of *The Crag*, we were in the thick of lockdown with no light at the end of the tunnel. I put a call out for people to tell us their lockdown stories, and a number of people answered. Thanks to them! They give us a snapshot of how we are doing. Now libraries and museums around the country are collecting stories too, including our Willoughby Library local studies team. See the Mayor's column.

Now there is some lightening of lockdown, but we remain committed to the online version, partly because we can distribute it to you two weeks sooner, but also because we wanted to support our local businesses by offering them 50% off their advertising fee, because we have no printing cost. It also gives the restaurants the opportunity to communicate their immediate availability and lockdown menus.

We have already received feedback that people prefer their hard copy of *The Crag*. Rest assured – it will be delivered to your letterbox, not your inbox next issue. This is a special online *Corona Crag*. Please check with friends and neighbours to see if they received their *Corona Crag* via the CPA mailing list. Suggest they send their address to info@castlecrag.org.au if they wish to receive it and be included in other community communications. Alternatively, forward on your copy to them!

One of the silver linings of the lockdown has been that people are out and about, walking in the streets, and discovering new pathways and bushland tracks. There's a lot more greeting going on. There also



seems to be a greater appreciation of living close to nature and the all-round benefits it brings to us. The Sugarloaf (Harold Reid Reserve) circular track has been so popular that sometimes, like Edinburgh Road, it is like Pitt Street and almost impossible to maintain social distancing! Yet it is wonderful to see people getting out and enjoying the wonderful bushland that surrounds us.

However, one recent bushwalk in the Northern Escarpment did not bring joy. There's a beautiful little cave I've known since childhood as 'Devil's Cave.' I was very disappointed to see it had litter all around it and worse – it had been graffitied. Do you recognise the tags?

Further along this rarely trod track I found that a dirt bike track had recently been constructed, which involved sawing down a small tree and moving considerable earth and rocks to construct a 'jump'. A rake was nearby, having been used to clear the track of leaf matter. If your rake has gone missing, and your child is into dirt bike riding, please have a chat to explain to them that their fun-making is doing damage to the bush, reptile and animal habitats. Not to mention that this is actually illegal, and Council is now monitoring the site.

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 fo the CPA Inc., and enclose payment of: \$20 per person \$
(Cheque or direct debit to Castlecrag Progress Association Inc. BSB: 032 199 Account No: 355621) \$10 per student \$

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

Name:

Address:

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Please post to the Treasurer:

PO Box 4259
Castlecrag 2068

Visit:
castlecrag.org.au/join

From the President



I hope everyone is well in these unusual times of the coronavirus. The virus has affected everyone, worldwide, and we are no exception. We had to cancel our April AGM and, at the

time of writing, we still have no idea when we will be able to have the meeting to elect a new Committee. Fortunately, we have been advised by NSW Fair Trading that we are able to continue without the AGM for some time yet.

We had 12 nominations for the 12 positions on the Committee, including two new possible members, Hugh Stowe and Stuart Frith. The Committee decided, that in the meantime, until we can hold the AGM, we would co-opt Stuart and Hugh onto the Committee to fill the 2 vacant positions. We welcomed them both at our first-ever Zoom Committee meeting. They have already made a significant contribution to our efforts by helping us prepare a submission to Council regarding the proposed redevelopment of 3 The Postern. You can find brief background summaries for Stuart and Hugh on CPA's website castlecrag.org.au.

A few days before the due date for community submissions, CPA was notified by a resident of The Parapet that a DA for 3 The Postern had been made. Fortunately, we sought and were granted an extension and were able to consider our submission properly. While we are not opposed, in principle, to the redevelopment of this site, we did register our objection to the proposed design. In particular, the proposal would have a large, 3 storey, almost featureless wall extending from The Postern along the northern boundary of the site, across the current carpark area requiring

the removal of all the trees currently sitting in front of the old building. If you haven't already seen our submission, you can find it on our website.

There is not much to report regarding the Quadrangle redevelopment. Our understanding is that Dr Quek's architect, fjmt, is preparing documents for either a DA or a Planning Proposal for the site. As soon as we know more we will let you know by email, if you are on our mailing list, and on our website.

Another concern at the moment is the frequency of drivers speeding along Edinburgh Road, and, in particular, between Linden Way and The Citadel. I can understand the attraction. It is a fairly long and straight section of road and I well remember, when in my twenties, riding a motorbike too fast along this section of road. A dog ran out in front of me; we collided, the dog was killed and, very nearly, doing the same to me.

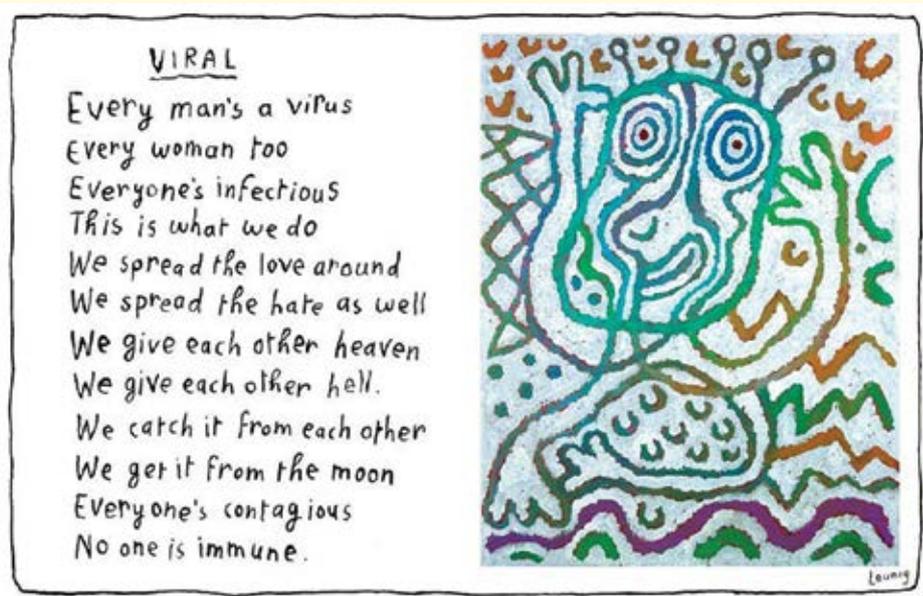
Most people observe the 50 kph speed limit but there are some tradies and a few drivers of expensive, fast cars who have been

seen to travel in excess of 70 kph along this stretch. We were concerned about the potential risk with so many pedestrians using the bicycle path to ensure proper social distancing. So, we approached the mayor with some ideas for greater safety. As a result, the speed sign was installed. Pity it went on the blink so soon after! If you live along Edinburgh Road and are concerned about this problem, please let us know and tell us what you think might be usefully done to slow the speedsters.

Paul Stokes

Limerick for our times

There once was a nurse called Shona
Who gave me the test for Corona
She stuck a swab up my nose
Then down throat she goes
And says
If you've got it we'll phone ya!
Anon.



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From The Mayor



So much has happened since my last column – our world has changed in ways that we could never have imagined. I'd like to thank you for your patience and support during this challenging time.

Willoughby City Council has worked hard to maintain our essential services during the COVID-19 crisis including waste collection and looking after our vulnerable citizens. While our facilities have been closed, we have continued to deliver many of our popular workshops and library services online. Willoughby Symphony is sharing digital performances on its new Facebook page and even Council meetings are being held virtually. Visit our website to find out more.

To support local businesses and community groups, we announced a \$1.66 million business support plan which includes relief on rents, fees and penalties. Please consider shopping local to support our business community.

We are asking the community to share stories about life during COVID-19 to help us document this extraordinary moment

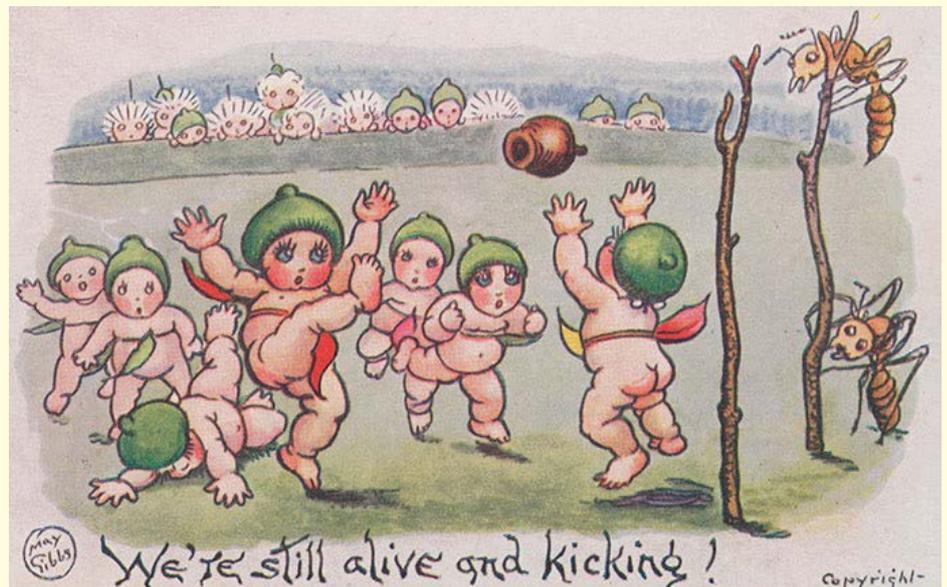
in history for future generations. Our Library Local Studies Team will be collating the contributions into an online historical showcase to reflect the experiences of the Willoughby community. I invite you to share your photos, videos and memories – visit <https://www.haveyoursaywilloughby.com.au/willoughby-in-covid-19> to become part of history.

We are continuing to deliver our planned projects. Willoughby Park playground is under construction and due to be completed in late June. In pleasing recycling news, the old playground

equipment will be sent to Cambodia for reuse, the rubber softfall will be used as a crumb layer for new undersurfacing and the concrete will be crushed for reuse.

As we start to see easing of restrictions, please continue to keep safe by maintaining good hand hygiene and practising social distancing. We will get through this together.

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.



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Are you planning to renovate or rebuild? Do you want to know your home's before and after value? Do you need help understanding current selling regulations or identifying features demanded by current buyers?

Craig and Sharon have bought, renovated and sold many properties in Sydney's Lower North Shore over the past 30 years. Their passion for the local area and understanding of planning regulations can help you achieve your home ownership dreams.

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McGrath

2021 Castlecrag's centenary and park proposal

2021 will be the centenary of the Griffins' Castlecrag and the 150th anniversary of Marion Mahony Griffin's birth. The Walter Burley Griffin Society (the "Society"), along with other local organisations, is planning many events to celebrate these historic milestones.

One significant project that we believed Willoughby Council was undertaking for 2021 was the creation of a small park at the corner of The Postern and Edinburgh Road, to replace the existing top carpark. The carpark is a large area of bitumen but holds just 8 cars and was, until the 1960s, a road reserve and large vegetated Griffin road island.

The park was first proposed by Council's consultants in the Draft Local Centre Strategy (LCS) and the Society and many Castlecrag residents have from the outset been supportive of it. Throughout the LCS consultation process, the Society has suggested that the park project would be an appropriate and lasting tribute to specially honour Marion Mahony Griffin.

At the Council meeting on 9 December 2019, Adrienne Kabos addressed Willoughby Council on behalf of the Society and said that creation of the park would significantly enhance the village atmosphere at the Castlecrag shops and honour the Griffins' great respect for nature and the landscape. Adrienne requested Council to budget for construction of the park in 2021 to celebrate the centenary of the Griffins' Castlecrag in November 2021.

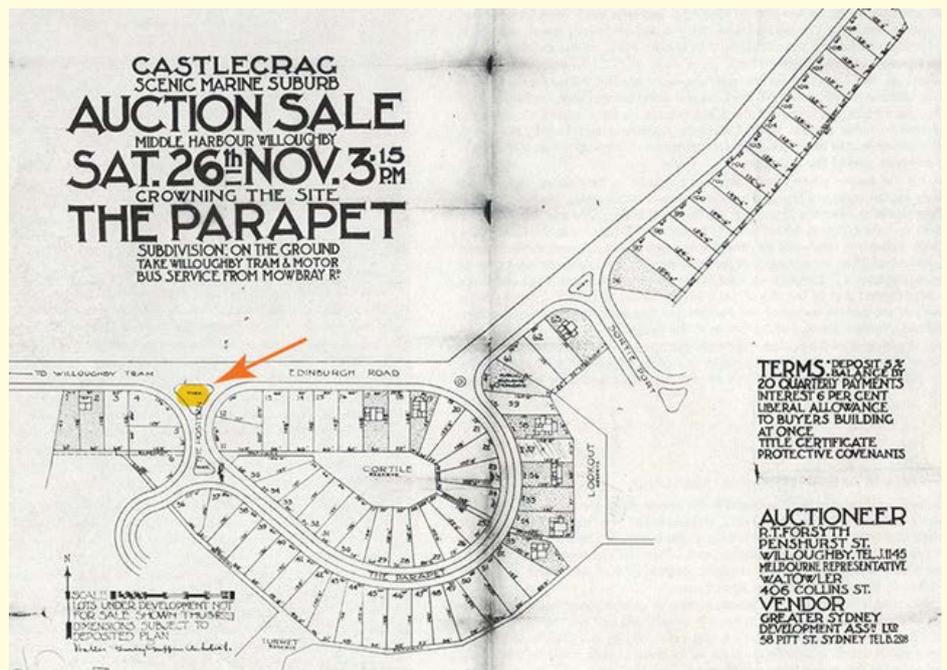
Our Ward Councillors supported the park concept and Council adopted it at the meeting on 9 December, officially making it part of the long-term planning for the Castlecrag village centre. However, regrettably, Council did not budget for the park this coming financial year, instead advising the Society they would proceed with community consultation and design work for the park with the aim of having a temporary "pop-up" park for the end of 2021.

When the Society replied, requesting there should be a permanent park rather than a temporary one, Council responded that any permanent park would be contingent on a "whole of site" approach along with The Quadrangle's eventual redevelopment plans, and that in the interim they would carry out repairs to the sandstone walls of the carpark and plant some new native plants and trees.



Above: Indicative masterplan published in WCC's final LCS with proposed community park shown at the corner of The Postern

Below: Griffin's 1921 Auction Plan showing the park that existed until 1960s at corner of The Postern and Edinburgh Road



Understanding this to be an issue of funding, the Society approached the Federal member for North Sydney, Trent Zimmerman, who contacted the Mayor Gail, mentioning possible federal support given the national significance of the Griffins. However, she indicated that, while appreciating the significance of the Griffin anniversary and the potential for federal grant funding, at this stage Council will undertake only maintenance to the carpark and the creation of a permanent park will remain contingent on the Quadrangle's redevelopment.

The Society is very disappointed about this missed opportunity to celebrate in 2021 the centenary of the Griffins' Castlecrag and the sesquicentenary of Marion Mahony Griffin with this significant project which would become a lasting tribute to Marion. The proposed park is the ideal location to remember her amazing creativity and commitment to the environment and the community.

Akky Van Ogtrop
President,
Walter Burley Griffin Society

Sugarloaf Baywatch



Shark Spotting

Readers may recall the article *Shark Attacks in Middle Harbour in The Crag #204* which detailed the various attacks over the last 80 odd years. It also referred to more recent sightings. There's been a new one.

In early April, Castlecrag friends Pip Gill and Millie Austin were walking along the lower bush track on Sugarloaf. They were near the big rock that sits above the water facing the Northern Escarpment of Castlecrag, when they heard some fish jumping out and splashing in the water.

Pip recalls "We went over to see what was going on and noticed the shark, which was about 7ft long. I quickly got a video of it. It was only in sight for about a minute or two, but we were amazed about how big and close it was to us."

Pip posted her clip onto the Willoughby Living Facebook page and it was very popular, receiving over 500 comments and nearly 700 likes, loves and wows (emoticon reactions). Quite a few people commented that they have swum there,

but were now seriously reconsidering!

Clearly many are not aware of the history of our place and that this was where Bruno Rautenburg was taken by a shark in February 1955, as he swam his daily laps across the bay from the bottom of Stoker Park and back.

Three weeks after Pip and Millie documented their sighting, a tiger shark was spotted down the harbour at Balmoral Beach, inside the square pier that juts out from beside the Boathouse Café. Mosman Council had to physically remove the shark the next day and repair the spot where it had got in. Recent storms also damaged the nets, causing Council to advise swimmers to do so at their own risk.

Maybe these sightings will alert people to the notion that continuing to jump off boats & paddle around the shores where there's no net to protect one, is indeed risky business.

View Pip Gill's clip here: <https://castlecrag.org.au/shark-in-sugarloaf-bay/>

Seal Spotting

Our thanks to local, John Vaughn, for this wonderful photo of a sea lion sunning at Sugarloaf Point.



Fire Spotting

Fortunately for those living on the Northern Escarpment, there were eagle eyes and nimble bodies about when a fire flared up below their homes in late April.

Nearby residents of Edinburgh Road noticed smoke coming from bushland down below them. Glen Hermann, Callam & Niall Ferguson, Kate Hunter & Peter Raper and their sons, builders from 207, as well as newcomer Jamie from 219, raced down the tracks to the bay to find a fire burning to the west of the boatshed below 207. A professional fisherman came

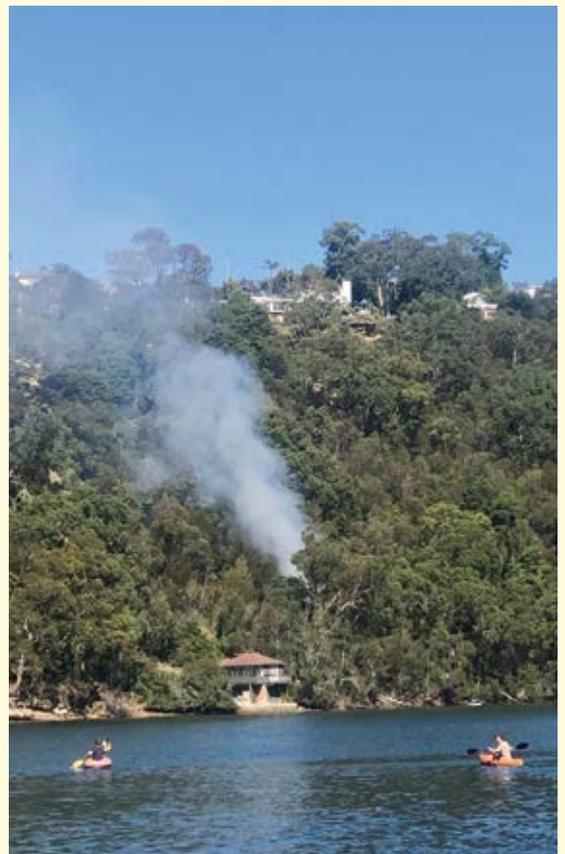
by water and a couple of kayakers were also on their way to help. There is a water supply down to the boatshed, so they were able to make a start at putting the fire out. They used buckets, plastic storage containers, wet towels. One of the builders went up to get a hose. People ran home to get what they needed.

One of the highlights was pushing the hose up into the hollow trunks of 4m high trees to put the fire out. The locals had it under control within about 30 mins, by which time two fire engines had arrived with the 'Firies' keen to finish off and ensure containment. Emily Herrmann went to meet them up on the road and asked for the builders to give them direct access through 207. Police were then called 20 minutes later to interview people and to investigate how the fire was started. The 'firies' worked out that it had started from embers not properly put out in the BBQ pit the night before.

Luckily, everyone was home due to COVID. At any other time it would have been a different story. The owners of 207 must surely be

very grateful to their neighbours for acting so quickly, and potentially preventing the fire reaching their new home.

Photo: Susie Gordge



Skeletons come out of the closet

In a bid to spread some community comedy and cheer, Cecil the Skeleton has been coming out in Sugarloaf Crescent for over 5 years now. The Luty family has been entertaining their neighbours by positioning their humorous skeleton art installations around their home and garden, and so far, have created about 35 comedic scenes.

Kolt Luty explained how the idea began. "My wife (Mali) and I are both Canadians and decorating for Halloween has always been a big part of our upbringing. When we purchased in Sugarloaf Crescent 6 years ago we couldn't wait to create an ultimate Halloween scene for our neighbours to enjoy. Over the years we've acquired several Halloween decorations and when we found Cecil we just had to have him!" The Lutys gave their bony friend his name over a few glasses of wine and it just stuck.

"When we first got Cecil, I wasn't sure where to position him so that everyone driving or walking by could see him, so I kept moving him around. Mali would often come home from work and laugh at how he was always somewhere different, so I stepped it up a bit one day and had Cecil dressed in her rock climbing gear to abseil the side of the house. She thought it was so funny, she posted it to Willoughby Living (WL) Facebook page for the rest of the community to comment on, and it took off from there!"

Since then, photos of the created scenes are always posted on WL, eliciting laughter and hundreds of positive comments and reactions from the wider community. First it was just Cecil, but then a love interest was sparked when the Lutys excavated Cecilia. A romantic courtship and marriage proposal ensued, culminating in the Sugarloaf Crescent Wedding Ceremony last Halloween. You can read about the great love story here: <https://willoughbyliving.com.au/cecil-the-skeleton-a-willoughby-living-love-story/>

Covid-19 was the most recent theme with



Above: Cecil in lockdown showing his good taste in reading material.

Below: Cecil proposes

the joke being around the toilet paper shortage. Cecil and Cecilia operated a community loo paper exchange centre out the front on the nature strip. "Need one, take one. Got one, leave one!" said the sign as Cecil sat on the throne displaying an excellent choice of reading matter. Their dog, Boner was exceptionally well behaved and sat still at their feet the whole time. Not once did he bark, sniff, nor jump up on passers-by.

Koilt explained, "He's very well trained as he should be – my wife is Mali The Dog Trainer!" www.malithedogtrainer.com.au/.

The Luty family are gearing up for this year's DIY Vivid which starts on May 22. It promises to be an illuminating event. Do yourselves a favour and swing by to see what they've come up with this time.

Cecil is a 21st Century Skeleton. He has his own Instagram feed [@ceciltheskeleton.au](https://www.instagram.com/ceciltheskeleton.au).

The Luty Family live at 'The Rock' 9 Sugarloaf Crescent.



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CASTLECRAG SPORTS CLUB

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- Book a tennis court at the Castlecrag Cellars for **\$15 per hour**
- Call coach Michael Tebbutt on **0410 992 320** for lessons
- Email castlecragtennis@bigpond.com for membership

Local lockdown lore

We have lived on The Bulwark for the last eight years, with our 8 and 10 year old daughters, Scarlett & Alexa. During Lockdown we've fallen in love with Castlecrag all over again. With weekends freed from school sports and the other activities of a busy family life, we've pumped up our heart rates by roaming the suburb, walking tracks and cut-throughs and have discovered four stunning new walks on our doorstep.

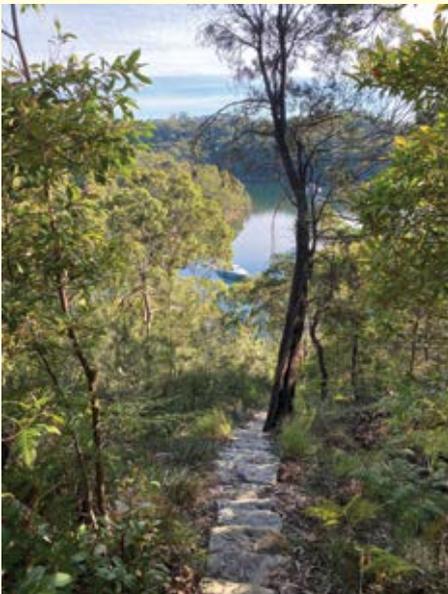
It's not only being so close to the water and nature that lifts the spirits. It's also the nods of acknowledgement and the consideration people show when they (mostly) make space on walks. It's also the smiles as you see parents watching their kids scoot and cycle down our hilly side roads and the giggles of surprise when you see a neighbour wrestling a massive stuffed tiger down the road. Like you do.

In the early days of the lockdown our daily exercise aligned with council clear-up and the treasures from our neighbourhood were laid bare, with turtle paddling pools, chairs, board games and exercise bikes providing much amusement to our kids. It also turned a 20 minute walk to the shops into a 2 hour round trip filled with treasures galore and repeated cries of 'put that DOWN'. However, one thing did make it home – a kind neighbour disposed of a boardgame called Pickwits and it's become a firm family favourite. So, thank you to our benefactor on The Bulwark!

We've also celebrated wedding anniversaries and Friday Family nights,

Sally Finlay sent these photos that tell a few stories:

More time/desire to explore our beautiful walks – down below Stoker Park



Paul's street birthday party observing social distancing. Photo: Isabelle Connolly



thanks to locals Yang & Co, Hello Sailor and Motza – complete with table cloths, flowers, candles and music at home to make things fun. We're looking forward to supporting more local businesses over the next few weeks and are so grateful that we have such great local shops and restaurants. Thank goodness for those walks!

Karen & Colin Phipson

I have noticed a huge increase in people exercising along Edinburgh Road, which is great, but there has also been a huge increase in people pushing prams/walking/and running along the cycle path.

This puts people very close to traffic.

Many are wearing headphones too and cannot hear the traffic or even cars honking their horns. I think it's just a matter of time before we have a pedestrian accident along Edinburgh Road.

Maybe council could look at removing the parking on one side of Edinburgh to put in a dedicated bike/running lane, similar to what exists in Lane Cove in some areas.

I think council should also look at the cycle path disappearing on the crest and in front of the church. These are already blind spots for drivers, it is dangerous having the cycle path merge onto the road at these points, especially as the path is being used by all right now.

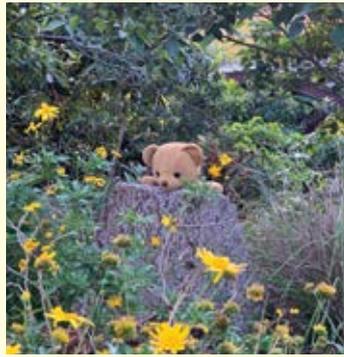
Ilana Crawford

My neighbour delivered chocolate cookies straight from the oven, still on the baking tray to the top of my driveway! All social distancing observed!

The only visitor we had was this Magpie!



Local lockdown lore cont...



Walking Edinburgh Road the friendliness & community spirit is clear. People smile at strangers, stop for a chat, chat with friends as you walk by their house, inevitably you get introduced to people you don't know and stronger community bonds are formed. Also exploring the bush tracks with recent wonderful weather has been magnificent.

Stuart Frith

I'd just like to say a huge thank you to the person who played the "Last Post" on their trumpet on Anzac Day (somewhere near to The Citadel/The Battlement), beautifully played, very moving and accompanied by a stunning sunrise. Very special, again thank you.

Heidi Massey

Let's make some lemonade. What have you seen this week that warmed your heart? This afternoon on my walk one neighbour had free parsley seedlings and chilli's, another free mulch. Lots of Dads playing with their children. Ball games, ping pong and bike riding. Everyone said hello. Young kids and the elderly all smiling. Covid Crisis? Nah, we are a beating Covid Community!

Gail Gidney

Isolation stories: I am getting in two or three walks every day since university campuses are closed and there are no evening meetings, concerts, dinner parties. I know who in the neighbourhood is doing home improvements and how all the building sites are progressing. The house and garden are in good shape. Local birds are demanding food every day and getting fat. I have written quite a few articles and book reviews, and even made cake and Anzac biscuits.



Psychologically however, it is hard to take and as the weeks drag on it gets harder. Here in Castlecrag we are to some extent in a bubble. There are whole communities of people who are doing it really tough, including asylum seekers (not included in any of the government handouts) and international students who stayed here over the summer break.

Jocelyn Chey

Social distancing rules may have closed our local gym, but thankfully the bushland pathways of Castlecrag remain open to us. Our favourite route starts at the end of The Barricade from where a bush track runs along the waterfront all the way to the Castlecrag Marina. One can also join the track by going down between numbers 5 and 7 The Scarp, or follow the relatively recently improved steps down The Amphitheatre.

Once we've checked out the activity at the Marina and chatted to the boaties, we cross over the road and find a bit of a goat track leading up and that quickly gives way to a less steep but still rough track, continuing along the waterfront all the way to Sailors Bay Track. From there, we continue along the creek to The Palisade at Northbridge, and then up Bellambi Street to Sailors Bay Road.

After a coffee at The Local (takeaway of course), we set off back home. We go

up from Warner's Park through the bush tracks that lead either to the back of the Castlecrag Library or to The Rampart and then along the track to Cortile Reserve and tennis courts, or the one to Lookout Reserve behind The Rampart.

Finally the track that dives down between 19 and 21 The Bastion takes us all the way behind The Battlement (through Gargoyle & Oriel Reserve) and eventually back home to The Scarp. It's an outing that takes about 2 hours (including the coffee stop!)

Once we missed by minutes seeing a lyrebird bathing in the creek by the waterfall. A man from Neutral Bay who was using the track for the very first time had footage on his phone camera. The light was just right, and the lyrebird magical!

Council has also recently done some excellent work to open up a track alongside 2 The Barquette. This useful route is an alternative way into Watergate Reserve and is another great way to reach Sailors Bay Track and Northbridge.

We are grateful that Council has recently spent a lot of time and effort clearing out fallen trees and shrubs, one of which did make the very last section of the track from the Marina to Sailors Bay Track impassable. In fact, since the recent storms caused some of the mighty Angophoras to fall down and take out some of the scrub, the views out over the water have cleared in

places, and the fallen trees now off to the side of the tracks are habitat for many tiny bush birds.

We are indeed fortunate to live in Castlecrag with bushwalks at our doorstep and we hope that eventually Council will open all the pathways that Marion Griffin envisaged in her original concept for Castlecrag.

Colin and Fiona Burman

Local lockdown lore cont...



We've certainly been living through unprecedented times & are sure after this crisis is relegated to the history books, some of us will be asking why didn't I use that time more constructively! Having been retired for some years, I've already had experience of filling in time and in my own case since Coronavirus arrived, I've been joining the Pitt Street crowd, walking along Edinburgh Road to our local shops, with the inevitable detour to our wonderful French Patisserie 'Ganache', from where I obviously never leave empty

handed! There's also the social aspect of being greeted by the friendly faces of staff who are the very essence of life & the community in Castlecrag. Walking, quite apart from the visual aspect, also allows us time to listen to the bird calls and breathe in the fragrances that we all too often miss out on!

Some of my activities during this lockdown period were coincidental, eg DIY jobs around the house which were already on the list! Internet contact has played a large part of my day, keeping me in touch with friends & family around the world and because of it's global perspective, I soon realised we're faring much better than many other countries.

Music as always, is playing a large part in my life and I'm much more likely to be listening to a Puccini Opera or Miles Davis Jazz CD, than watching TV! It also plays a part during my other major activity cooking and although it's just for one these days, there's no lesser amount of work required than preparing a meal for five people!

Another activity I've found absorbing during this time is fixing up my own and friend's old or damaged photographs using my "little helper" 'Photoshop Fix!' It started a while back when I became the custodian of many old family photographs many of which needed attention but it's



now become something of an obsession, so much so that even when folk send me their recent photos which are usually on a smartphone, I'll often adjust the framing & brightness & "paint out" that annoying tree branch that appears to be growing out of someone's head! Being a retired Cinematographer, I have to say that you'll never replace a proper camera... although Apple might disagree of course!

Roger Boyle

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Beaches Link – All Pain, No Gain?

The NSW Government is forging ahead with its process to construct a tunnel from Rozelle to Seaforth which locally will cut through Naremburn, Flat Rock Gully and Middle Harbour.

The Government is issuing the Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for the project in two parts. The first, for the Western Harbour and Warringah Expressway closed for public consultation at the end of March.

Those making submissions could classify them as either supporting, objecting to or commenting on the proposal. There were 1376 submissions from members of the public; 1270 opposed, 87 comments and 19 in support. It's clear that many oppose the project because of the wide range of negative impacts on air quality, noise levels, traffic and the bushland and marine environments in Willoughby.

Twenty submissions were from public authorities including the affected councils, North Sydney and Willoughby, with some other councils lodging objections. A majority of Willoughby councillors chose to have Willoughby's submission lodged as a comment. There were 59 submissions from other organisations. You can find all the submissions at: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10451>.

Some submissions said that no meaningful consideration was given to public transport

alternatives despite such considerations being requirements of the EIS. These include B-line, which came into operation after the EIS modelling was done, Sydney Metro City and Southwest (under construction), Sydney Metro West (going through the EIS process now - submissions close soon) and the proposed B2-line from the Northern Beaches to Chatswood.

COVID-19 will have major and long-term impacts on the economy which will affect the data and models used for the EIS. An increase in unemployment, and more people working from home will reduce private car usage in the longer term. More reason to reconsider this car tunnel and revisit public transport.

North Sydney and Willoughby Council noted that the EIS made it clear that the proposed project will permanently increase congestion on a number of local roads stating:

"The area of greatest concern is between Lane Cove Tunnel, Epping Road/Longueville Road and Miller Street. The modelling reveals poor performance of the mainline and intersections in the weekday morning peak period. Whilst not indicated in the traffic modelling, the northbound and westbound traffic in the Tunnel, Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Harbour Tunnel during the weekday afternoon peak period is likely to lead to congestion and travel

time delays as traffic enters the Gore Hill Freeway, Naremburn." (WCC p2)

"Access arrangements ... are anticipated to result in a redistribution of traffic within Willoughby local government area. The key factor ... is the proposed access ... to the new Tunnel and Sydney Harbour Tunnel from Brook Street and Miller Street ... [via] the Berry Street and Falcon Street portals. There is concern that residents and regional traffic ... will use the Willoughby Road and Reserve Road interchanges to access the Tunnel mainline portals. Traffic ... [using] Sydney Harbour Tunnel ... [from] Brook Street on-ramp will also likely use the Willoughby Road interchanges rather than use other routes. The impacts ... [are] reduced road safety and amenity on ... Sailors Bay Road, Mowbray Road, Frenchs Road, Alpha Road, Edinburgh Road, Reserve Road, Willoughby Road, Dalleys Road, Herbert Street and Frederick Street." (WCC p27)

There is concern about the EIS process itself. No business case has been released but tunnel project positions have been advertised and circulated.

The second part of the EIS, due for release mid-2020 will include Flat Rock Gully bushland and the dredging of Middle Harbour, so keep your eyes out for this important document, and consider making a submission.

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Castlecrag Notes

Do you have Event Management skills?

There was a lot of positivity about last year's Castlecrag Fair. It was a great day for community building and participation. This propels the CPA to do it again in 2021 but the committee needs a person/people to co-ordinate it, and others to take on roles like Publicist, Entertainment and Stallholder Co-ordinator. Planning needs to begin soon, so if you have some experience in, or are a student of event management, and have some time to give to your community, please contact us at: info@castlecrag.org.au. The committee needs more heads & hands to make the biennial fair possible.

Good News on Bushland Pathway in Griffin Conservation Area

A number of residents are making good use of the recently cleared bushland pathway (pathway P-34) between 14 Rockley Street and 2 The Barquette. This is a neat route that leads to a grassed clearing and thence to the main Watergate Reserve.

Update on Merlon Reserve pathway between 20 The Scarp and 34 The Bulwark

We are grateful to Council for undertaking the clearing work which makes this pathway accessible. As advised in the

October issue of *The Crag*, Council has declined to fund major 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.

Boomerang Bags

Have you taken advantage of the bags on the stands outside the Fruit shop and IGA? It is so handy when one forgets to bring a shopping bag. However, people are slipping up the other way too, and forgetting to bring them back. Remember! They are BOOMERANG bags, and every Aussie knows what that means! About 150 have been made by our generous sewers, yet there's now only a handful of the locally made ones in circulation.

Street Libraries

In the dark of Covid, we took books away from our libraries for fear of contamination, but people kept bringing books to share. We are now cleaning, sorting and re-opening the libraries for book exchange. The Adult Street Library box will be relocated from the sadly now closed Cottage and Coast to the Quadrangle, where the Children's box is presently located.

But please! Supervise and teach your

children to respect books and the street library. No-one is paid to deliver this service. It is disheartening for the honorary street librarians to tidy one day and next day find the doors open and books sprawled all over the ground. We hope everyone will take responsibility to keep it tidy even if you're just walking by and notice the mess. Thanks.

Annual Winter Appeal

Blankets are not in demand this year due to rough sleepers being accommodated in hotels. However, at both Kings Cross and Bondi Wayside Chapels, there is a high demand for warm clothing especially the items listed below. Women's and Men's sizes S,M,L,XL.

Second-hand: Socks, Hoodies, Track suit tops/bottoms, Warm T-Shirts, Coats, Joggers/boots/shoes.

New: Order a few pairs of socks or underwear on-line from KMart, for example, and have KMart deliver the parcel to the Wayside address:

The Wayside Chapel
PO Box 66
Potts Point NSW 1335

This is a good idea in the Covid19 lockdown as it can be done from home. More importantly, we are assured that such donations will be of immediate value to

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Notes continued...

those homeless who visit daily to have a shower and receive underwear. It would be possible to identify the sender as a Castlecrag community member or the parcel could be an anonymous donation.

From 1-7 June, clothing can be dropped off to a box which will be under cover at the Griffin Centre, outside the old Cottage & Coast. It will then be delivered to Wayside Chapel.



Ben's Top Tips for Homeowners

I have been writing articles for *The Crag* for the last 10 years about the wonderful houses in Castlecrag. I am passionate about domestic architecture and the rich architectural history in Castlecrag.

Future articles will feature on simple tips to help people considering renovating or building a new house.

Tips in finding an architect (the old fashioned way)

- Speak to family and friends who have had a good working relationship with their architect.
- Look at magazines and houses that are open for inspection to see what you like and enquire who the architect was if it was designed by an architect.
- Speak to the real estate agents in the area and ask them if they know any local architects as these architects will be familiar with Council requirements.
- Speak with any builders you know who might recommend a good architect they have worked with.
- When driving around suburbs and you see a house which you like, get the courage and knock on the door and ask if an architect was engaged in the design and get the details.

- If you see an architect's sign in your suburb, give them a ring as they should be familiar with the requirements of Council.
- Finally, google architects and look at their website.

Tips to improve your existing house

- Look at all the rooms in the house and ask yourself are all the rooms used effectively and see if their function can change instead of thinking you having to add more space.
- If you knocked out a wall between 2 rooms, would that solve a planning problem?
- Update the house cosmetically by a new colour scheme, removing carpet and polishing the timber floors.
- Connect the back of the house to the backyard yard by opening up the rear of the house by using bi-fold or stackable sliding doors and add a terrace to link the house to the back yard.
- Build a covered access from the car to the front door.

Ben Gerstel

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Martha's

breakfast lunch dinner bar

We would like to thank you all for your fantastic support during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Now that restrictions are easing, we are pleased to be able to open our doors again for lunch and dinner as well as continuing our Martha's At Home takeaway service – orders need to be in by 2pm.

We will be open from Wednesday to Saturday and have 2 sittings for each service with 10 customers per sitting, so that we can comply with all the social distancing requirements.

Please check our website for further information: marthas.com.au or if you prefer call us on **9967 8299**.

83 Edinburgh Rd Castlecrag NSW 2068

Warners Park Community Garden



As public gatherings of more than 2 people have been prohibited since March, we've evolved a 'solitary gardening' regime at Warners. Gardeners have been enjoying their gardening 'separated from each other' and on different days of the week, accompanied by a significant increase in email communication. The adaptability has been remarkable.

Four harvesting highlights this quarter have been impressive crops of hairy gourds/melons, gold tamarillos, finger limes as well as a number of handsome self-seeded Kent (or Jap) pumpkins.

Hairy gourds/melons (also known as fuzzy gourds/melons) enjoy a fine reputation among those familiar with them. They're prized in the homes of a number of our gardeners for their nutritional value as well as making a delicious soup (among other things) and word is getting around. Recipes have been shared and they're being tried by other adventurous garden cooks.

Our promising gold tamarillo tree is one which does well in shade. It delivered a nice crop this year. High in vitamin C and potassium while low in sodium, tamarillos pair nicely with apples contributing a hint of tartness to an apple and tamarillo crumble (see recipe below).

Finger limes are an Australian native 'caviar-like' delicacy. Finger-shaped as the name suggests, they contain fine pink-tinged pearls bursting a citrus-flavour sensation onto the palette. This year we had bumper crop on our potted tree. The pearls are easily extracted by cutting and squeezing across the circular axis. They're simply stunning with oysters or sprinkled on ice cream and fruit salad, or of course with gin and tonic.

Planting wise, garlic and pak choi are on the way. Rows of snow peas are taking root right now. Some leeks are already coming along and more seedlings are about ready to transplant. Other plans are for trout-

spotted lettuce, rainbow chard, cavolo nero, kale, Chinese celery, cabbage, and cauliflower.

Appreciation and acknowledgement is due to a number of community supporters, including Harris Farm High Street for providing composting material each week, McGrath for the children's raised mini-vegetable bed and Bunnings for recently donating a wheelbarrow, a trolley and other gardening tools/supplies. Many thanks to these valued community partners.

For now, please note that composting bins in the garden are closed to the public due to 'social distancing' for Coronavirus. Gardening meets also continue to be suspended at this time. We look forward to being able to a return to our 'normal' arrangements in the near future, that being Wednesday and Sunday mornings.

Mary Anne Veliscek
0430 173 722



Apple and Tamarillo Crumble

This recipe lends itself to adaptation and may motivate some readers to experiment in the cooler months ahead.

Tamarillo skin needs to be removed by blanching the fruit in boiling water for a few minutes. Then make an incision with a knife and the skin peels off very easily. For the fruit, combine 2 skinned and sliced tamarillos with 3 peeled and sliced granny smith apples, ¼ cup castor sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla essence and 1/8 cup of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 4-5 minutes until the apples have softened slightly without losing their shape. Spoon into an ovenproof dish. Prepare a crumble of ½ cup rolled oats, ½ cup flour, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 75g butter, ½ cup brown sugar, ¼ cup shredded coconut and ¼ cup pecan nuts. Spread crumble mixture evenly over the fruit and bake for 30 mins at 180C until golden and crunchy. Perfect served with ice-cream while still warm.



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Bushland News



Due to Covid, there have been no Bushcare gatherings for the last couple of months. Instead, some eager individuals have been participating in solitary weeding, or with one other whilst maintaining physical distancing. The sun and rain over summer has led to an abundance of weeds in vulnerable areas.

One such rampant weed is the **Cassia**, also known as **Senna (*Senna pendula* var. *glabrata*)**. Native to Brazil and Paraguay, it was a popular garden plant in past decades due to its showy masses of bright yellow flowers in Autumn. It produces a large amount of viable seeds so it has since spread far and wide throughout eastern NSW.

What does it look like? It is a tall upright shrub usually growing 2-4m tall but in optimal conditions can reach the high mark of 5m. Flowers are pea-like, bright yellow and form clusters at the ends of the branches. Leaves are compound (made up of leaflets) and

each leaf is comprised of 3-5 opposite paired dark green leaflets with rounded tips. Senna produces long cylindrical pods (10-20cm in length) that turn from pale green to brown when mature. Each pod contains between 5 and 40 seeds.

Fun Fact: Can you eat the Senna pod? The short answer is yes, but only certain varieties and NOT THIS ONE! There are over 350 species in the Senna genus and less than 50 of these are cultivated for medicinal use and the *Senna pendula* is definitely not one of them. Historically certain species of Senna have been used as a laxative.

How to remove it: Now is the time to spot any Senna/Cassia plants on your site. Saplings are actually surprisingly easy to pull out by hand due to its shallow root structure. For larger specimens you can use the cut and paint method with glyphosate.

*Information supplied by
Monique Van Vugt
Bushcare Supervisor WCC*

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

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