



CASTLECRAG
PROGRESS
ASSOCIATION

THE CRAG

A voice for the community since 1925

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No. 216

OCTOBER 2023

All the fun of the Fair

It's countdown to Fair day and it's looking to be the best one yet. It's a time for the community to get together when the village centre is in such a state of flux. We've brought together community groups and individuals to provide an eclectic group of stalls for your enjoyment, as well as a fabulous line up of local entertainers throughout the day.

Gardeners will be spoilt for choice with an array of local native plants for sale and free advice from WEPA. There will be a stall of succulents for those who are that way inclined. The Market Garden Park Community Garden has been potting up summer vegetable seedlings to sell. Strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce, zucchinis plus others -many from seeds saved from previous successful crops. The Cortile Parkcare group will be beavering away pulling out weeds. If you need advice about removal of those pesky invaders just ask. First in - best served at the fresh flower stall!

The CPA will maintain tradition with a well-curated, second-hand book stall supplemented by tasteful bric-a-brac and perhaps jewellery (depending on your re-purposing donations!) On the day you will find the Griffin Society, Rotary, Council's Bushland Team, KU Castlecrag, local Girl Guides and Sea Scouts amongst the community groups holding stalls and providing information, a sausage sizzle and cake stalls.



Crag Arts will also be represented with a selection of local artworks. Resident vexillologist, John Vaughan, will be holding forth with his display and intricate knowledge of historical flags.

With only *Walter's Café* now in operation, McGrath (our generous major sponsor) is providing a coffee cart on the day. A gold coin donation will get you a coffee, and proceeds will go directly to charity. Much appreciated Harriet!

There will be a fascinating wildlife display to observe and interact with down in The Postern. The immersive experience will be running all day with pythons, lizards, turtles, spiders, bugs, frogs and a crocodile. All the animals are displayed in naturalistic enclosures or held for the public to touch. There will even be an opportunity to be photographed with the creatures.

To keep the kids further occupied, an inflatable slide will be erected in The Postern not far from the wildlife display. Local artists Karen Ferguson and Bella Garson will demonstrate their creative skills by painting faces for those who relish in such decoration!

It would be a good idea to bring some cash, as not all stalls will be set up to take cards.

Local Radio station 2NSB FM will base themselves outside the physio in the Griffin Centre and broadcast live from the Fair, as they did in 2019. Drop by and say hi!

Finally, we will have a stage in the lower Postern carpark as in the past, with a full day's line-up of local performing artists and school bands to entertain you (see program). Sit under the marquee amongst your neighbours and eat, drink and be merry at this memorable biennial, but for Covid, community event. **Editor**

Castlecrag Classic Car Display

If like me, you are teased by the odd glimpse of a classic motor disappearing from view down Edinburgh road, then this one is for you. We toured the garages of the Crag and picked the prettiest, raunchiest, and classiest cars from the classic period (say -1925 to the 1974 oil crisis).

The show is limited to 30 cars, but somehow covers the waterfront – from iconic Italian to functional French, British bulldogs and anabolic Americans. We're there from 10am till close. Owners will come and go, but there'll always be someone there to answer your questions.

There'll be a quiz for the kids and a chance to vote on the crowd favourite. We look forward to seeing you at The Parapet Castlecrag, from 10am, October 22.

Scott Graham



Special edition **CASTLECRAG FAIR - 22 October**

THE CRAG

is the community magazine of the
Castlecrag Progress Association Inc.

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Castlecrag NSW 2068

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Write to us

We welcome letters and contributions
from residents about local issues.

Send to: editors@castlecrag.org.au

Letters should be concise (preferably less
than 250 words).

Editorial guidelines are on the web page.

Disclaimer: The CPA and *The Crag* is not
responsible for information or advice in
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seek their own personal, professional advice.

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Please include your name,
address and email details.

www.castlecrag.org.au/join

Fair Hatha Yoga Taster Class

(Please bring a mat.)

Please join Shweta for a complimentary gentle Hatha yoga class. The class will focus on posture alignment, breath awareness and relaxation techniques making it safe and accessible for practitioners. Breath awareness will be a central part of this practice and students will learn to synchronize breath and movement deepening their mind - body connection. Class will start with breathwork followed by deep stretches. We will do some standing poses, seated and reclines poses, finishing the class with deep relaxation. Shweta is adept at modifying practices for different levels of practitioners and students are encouraged to work at their own pace.

Day: 22 October
Time: 2pm
Venue: Community Centre at bottom
of The Postern.



To book or enquire about the
complimentary class phone Shweta
on 0410 692 711 or email
shivflowyoga@gmail.com.
www.shivflowyoga.com

Upper body mobility issues? Try Flex-A-Tee!

Flex-A-Tee is a local small business and will have a stall at this year's Fair. Founded by lifelong Castlecrag resident, Anne Marie Jonas, the initial idea was to help dress her mum, Jenny, who had Alzheimer's. Jenny's carers asked Anne Marie to look for a top with a larger neckline. Sometimes her Mum wouldn't bend her arms and it wasn't easy to dress her. All Anne Marie could find were low cut tops or wrap arounds. She wondered whether anything might be available with a couple of press studs at the neckline (like baby wear)? In a word, No!

So, the design for Flex-A-Tee evolved to help everyone with upper body mobility restrictions. It uses press studs across both shoulders and down the sleeves; the neckline opens fully and the wearer can dress without raising their arms. The Tee can be brought down over the shoulders or up over the hips. Each wearer finds their own way for the Tee to work for them. It is made of high quality, 100% soft pre-shrunk cotton jersey fabric.

It soon became apparent that many people might be assisted by this design. They included those with dementia, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, and Cerebral Palsy, as well as the general aged and the disability care community. The Flex-A-Tee is useful for people after a stroke, shoulder or

breast surgery and during chemotherapy. The Tee can be changed without dislodging a cannula and is helpful for people with limited shoulder movement such as a frozen shoulder. As people see the Flex-A-Tee the list grows: arthritis, autism, breastfeeding. The design of the Tee is also long enough to hide the outline of incontinence pants.

Allied health professionals and shoulder surgeons love treating clients wearing a Flex-A-Tee as the client does not need to struggle in and out of clothing - just undo the press studs, treat the client, do the press studs up again and the client is on their way.

www.flexatee.com



Program

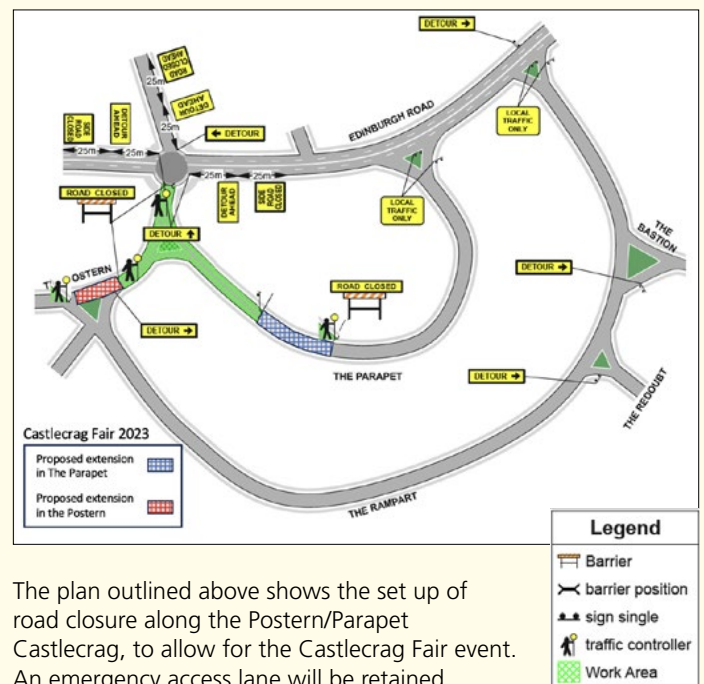
- 10 am Acknowledgement of Gamarai Country**
Opening of Fair by Mayor Tania Taylor.
- 10.10 am Melinda Conrad with Jeff Lenham**
Min Conrad sings her favourite songs with acoustic guitar accompanied by professional guitarist Jeff Lenham.
- 10.30 am Matt and Brian**
Matt from The Rampart plays with dear friend Brian. Their enthusiasm is infectious and their playlist memorable
- 11.00 am Willoughby Ukestars**
This local group is back for an encore after performing at the last Fair.
- 11.20 am Willoughby Public School Big Band**
This band comes out swinging with 45 players!
- 11.50 am Exercise with Radio Star Anna-Louise Bouvier**
What exercise can we do in 5 minutes at a Fair? Join Richard Glover's ABC exercise physio and Castlecrag's very own Anna-Louise Bouvier.
- 12.00 pm Bay Singers**
The Baysingers repertoire includes a broad mix of Acapella songs - African, 70's and 80's, Original, Civil Rights songs, Reggae etc.
- 12.30 pm TBF**
- 1.00 pm Glenaeon School Band**
Renowned for their school's commitment to high quality musicianship, the Glenaeon School Band always excels and entertains.
- 1.30 pm The Quiet Ones**
The band originally formed in 1964 as a group of teenagers in Hornsby. They came together again in 2007 to play with the Aztecs and have been playing to raise money for charities since then, including \$30,000 for a children's hospital in Sierra Leone. The band has a large repertoire of classic sixties songs as well as foot tapping newer songs.
- 2.00 pm The Young Ones**
This guitar/ukulele ensemble play classics from the 70's and 80's.

- 2.30 pm St Mary's Choir**
St Mary's Choir is a group combining parents and friends from St Mary's Church North Sydney and associated schools. Their repertoire covers jazz, pop ballads, folk and classical numbers.
- 2.50 pm Allegra**
Our youngest performer - Allegra from The Rampart.



Glenaeon School Band

Traffic management plan



The plan outlined above shows the set up of road closure along the Postern/Parapet Castlecrag, to allow for the Castlecrag Fair event. An emergency access lane will be retained.

CASTLECRAG

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Business as usual at The Q

CASTLECRAG SPORTS CLUB

Between the Parapet and Edinburgh Road
lies the Castlecrag Sports Club

- Book a tennis court at the Castlecrag Cellars for **\$20 per hour**
- Call coach Henry on **0431 149 533** for lessons
- Email castlecragtennis@bigpond.com for membership

Calling for donations

Scarves, books, bric-a-brac and jewellery!

Have you been meaning to cull your books (in good condition) and bits n pieces? CPA is seeking donations for their stall to fund their ongoing community work, which includes the publication of this magazine.

To have your goods collected, call **Mark on 0412 971 861**.



Volunteers.

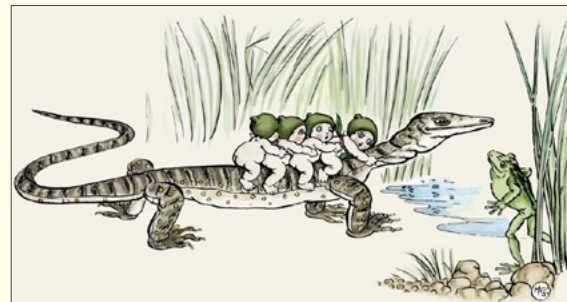
The Fair is run by the CPA and a handful of members who have already spent many hours planning this day for YOU! We need more volunteers on the day to make it happen, so please sign up here to the various tasks and contribute to your community by giving just a couple of hours of your time. It's good for the soul!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D49AAA828ABFD0-castlecrag>



Many thanks

for the 2023 Fair to the Castlecrag Progress Association and Fair Coordinator: Trish Lunn and Committee: Ingrid and Scott Graham, Matthew Keighery, Mary Anne Veliscek, Lindy Batterham, Kate Westoby, Mark Crew and Paul Stokes for brilliantly managing the financials.



© Cerebral Palsy Alliance and Northcott Society for May Gibbs

Appreciation and thanks to our sponsors
Harriet Halmarick from McGrath Real Estate, Willoughby City Council's Community Grants and Ilya Melnikoff from Lexcon.

We couldn't have done it without you!

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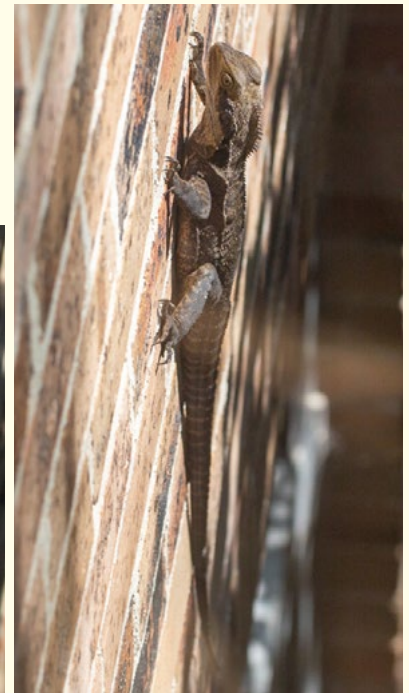
(l-r) *Grevillea buxifolia*, *Grevillea linearifolia*, *Grevillea speciosa*, *Grevillea buxifolia*

Flora - Grevilleas of our area

I am a huge fan of our Sydney Sandstone Grevilleas. I think they are a must for a native garden in these parts and so it is great to see so many of them flowering

around the place. Look for them at the WEPA plant stall

Matthew Keighery



Castlecrag Creatures

The Eastern Water Dragons are awake after winter - Edgar our resident chief male has recently spent a few days on a window sill getting his body temperature up. While the female just has to hang on by its claws close-by. See more lizards, frogs, snakes and more at the Creature Features stall.

Matthew Keighery



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Northbridge

Eulogy for a coffee shop

It was the end of August 2023. Most of the Quadrangle's shop windows displayed a hollow emptiness, yet customers were still lining up for coffee from Morry. For the past six years he had owned *Four Saints* and he was managing a sort of sad smile in these final weeks. People had been coming into this sunny coffee shop for decades before Morry. Loyal regulars were aware that this was a significant moment. If the coffee shop had ever been the beating heart of their village, it was now on life support.

Customers with long memories wondered what had happened to those other owner-baristas who served them over the decades. It was time to look-up previous owners to find out what the shop had meant to them. From 1997-2023 owners included Pamela Leung, Lisa and Connie Chow, 'Duke' from Brisbane, Sydney brothers Sean and Sevan and finally Morry Rehnama.

Pamela Leung was happy to share her thoughts. She was the original creative force who transformed the patisserie, known as *Treats and Temptations* into *Pam's Café*. With no previous café management experience, Pam faced a steep learning curve and before long customers came to appreciate her ability as an 'L Plate' barista. They would observe her determination to 'master the art of making a 'top-notch brew'. This she believed was 'essential to keep customers coming back.' A serious businesswoman she focused on building 'a positive, collaborative team of young wait-staff who would learn to give good service to customers.' By the mid 2000s her team was skilled, friendly and filled the shop with youthful energy and fun.

Speaking to nostalgic locals who recall those years, *The Crag* was reminded that regulars returned daily to be lampooned by the witty banter and mock servitude delivered by Amelia, as she brought your order to the table. Others recalled the polite professionalism of Pam's sons. Eugene and Adrian, whose barista skills attracted their own 'fans'. On a few memorable, relaxed afternoons in 2007, Adrian's original songs and guitar delighted customers at outside tables. Adrian is now a full-time composer living in Scotland. Eugene now has two cafes: *Cool Mac* in Kirribilli and *Kurumac* in Marrickville. Amelia is now a primary school teacher/acting principal.

Looking back, Pam is very clear that the long hours, hard work and passion she gave to motivate new and ongoing team

members was essential to give exceptional service to customers. Her personal reward is summed up in her own words: 'Being accepted and recognised by the community has filled me with joy and fond memories. As an immigrant, I valued the opportunity to learn about Australian culture and improve my communication skills which allowed me to build meaningful connections and friendships. It has been a truly enriching and rewarding journey'. Pam is now an artist with a Master of Fine Arts degree from the National Art School.

In 2008, Pam sold to Connie and Lisa Chow. From the start, Connie and Lisa didn't miss a beat. They came into their new adventure with experience and aplomb. Connie says he had watched the commercial life of the Quadrangle for some time. Lisa says he had to be convinced. Finally he reckoned the business of that small shop on Edinburgh Road would work for their young family of five. With the goodwill of Pam's customers continuing to enjoy the family community ambiance, the successful formula was in place and about to be enhanced by two confident, engaging people.

Lisa recalls the first week when she handed over a perfectly brewed 'Flat White' to a worried customer. He voluntarily confessed that he was, in fact, a loyal customer to the shop next door. With her signature poise and cheeky smile, Lisa raised her eyebrows and replied, 'I'm Lisa. Enjoy your coffee.' That customer never returned to the next door shop. He became 'a regular'. Lisa grins as she recalls that occasionally

he sat outside. To 'save' his table he would revert to hand signals through the window, to place his order, rather than line up inside. No problem for Lisa as she quickly learned coffee preferences for all regulars. After some time, and with a nod to their daughter, they changed the name to *Sam's Café*, and made some menu additions like Connie's extremely popular curry lentil soup.

The shop remained the heartbeat of Castlecrag. Outside tables were often full. Sometimes regulars worked on laptops among the cups. Weekly, groups of mothers would settle prams and highchairs around the tables. Contented dogs would be stepped over by tradies getting to the doorway for their take-always. 'Back in the day' Hazel (Hawke) would visit *Pam's* and years later, Gladys was a frequent early morning take-away coffee patron of *Sam's*.

One customer who had remained loyal to the coffee shop through thick and thin remarked, 'It was never the coolest place to hang out but it was ALWAYS the most comfortable, accessible and inclusive.' And that is what most people appreciated: it maintained that community, 'village feel'. Marion and Walter would have been pleased with the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of those at the tables of Castlecrag's cosy gathering place.

With Lisa and Connie customer service took on another dimension. It became customer care.

A regular customer wanting to get a message to her daughter would ring to ask Lisa to 'catch' the schoolgirl passing



(l-r) Previous café owners - Morry and Roya Rehnama, Pamela Leung, Lisa and Connie Chow

the shop on the way home. Lisa obligingly delivered the message. Sometimes morning calls came from locals on their way to work, placing coffee orders ahead, to be handed through their car windows! The shop also facilitated Tennis Court bookings.

Connie and Lisa became an integral part of the local community. Their empathy and understanding during crisis health moments for customers included escorting one bewildered customer home safely. Lisa and Connie gained a high level of community respect and appreciation for years of serving more than food and coffee. Their children shared the ups and downs of parents working all day, every day for 9 years. The proud parents (and grandparents) report Brandon, Samantha and Justin are now following careers in orthodontistry, assistant dental nursing and technology respectively.

Time accelerated after Lisa and Connie sold the business in 2016. They sold to Duke who, after a short while, returned to Brisbane for family reasons. Duke sold to Sean and his brother, Sevan who changed the name to *Four Saints Espresso and Kitchen*. Better offers came their way and the brothers sold to Morry Rahnama late in 2017.

The final chapter on this place of harmony and joyful friendships now comes full circle. Morry's migration story is richly woven with hope, struggle and determination to find his feet in a new country. Australia promised hope and above all freedom for his daughters to follow their own career choices. His vision for their futures was his reason for leaving his home in Iran. He left behind a partnership with his two brothers and his own career as a manager in a large dairy product plant.

When he arrived in Australia in October 2016, with his wife Roya and daughters, Romina and Ariana, he had no job. A year later he bought the coffee shop, keeping its name, *Four Saints*.

He worked without pay for three months to learn coffee shop management starting from scratch. In the preceding year, Roya had been employed, finding Australia eager to welcome her software engineering qualifications from the University of Shiraz. However, there were simply no open doors for Morry's University of Shiraz agricultural engineering qualifications, so the coffee shop was a godsend.

In February 2018, Morry felt ready to take on the full weight of the coffee shop.

He said with a frown, 'It was an enormous challenge competing with three Aussie guys next door.'

Back and Forth served good coffee, projected a cool vibe and was always busy.

Then came the Covid pandemic. Having a cool vibe no longer mattered. Morry kept his feet on the ground and stayed open every day providing take-away plus a sense of normalcy with his reliable presence. His customer friends kept his business afloat and filled his 'heart with joy with their kindness'. Some Castlecrag regulars masked-up and drove to pick up breakfast-to-go each day to encourage Morry, who was facing an unknown future. We all felt the uncertainty and fragility of existence. We were all living in the present with a relentless stream of information flowing from our televisions at 11am each morning. With deep respect and gratitude Morry tells of one customer who came in every day of the lockdown to buy several tubs of take-away soup. Not only was this customer giving the soup to locked down neighbours, but his purchases were clearly intended to help Morry's business survive during 2020.

As we now know, the pandemic did not put Morry out of business, but Quadrangle redevelopment has stealthily sealed the fate of the shop. Morry has been busy developing a new line of work as importer/exporter of dried dairy products. This will re-establish his connection with the thriving business he and his brothers once shared. Romana (25) and Ariana (19) are now following their desired study and career paths in dentistry and medical science.

Morry leaves the Castlecrag coffee shop experience with an incredibly positive view of what the community has given him. Many customers are now friends whose homes he has visited and whose families have enjoyed the hospitality of the Rehnama family. The warmth he found in the community has validated his original risky decisions. He says, 'The shop came to feel less like a business and more like a club where everyone knows everyone.' If you ask him, he will tell you: 'I think I can do anything now, with Roya of course, we can do anything'. He is glad he came to Castlecrag. So are we.

Whatever the future coffee shop provides in the new development, it will be hard-pressed to match the heartfelt humanity and harmony of the past two decades.

Vale *Four Saints*

Cheryl Tambllyn

Pamela Leung – Barista turned Artist



Pamela Leung (Pam) is introduced to audiences both here and internationally, as a Sydney-based artist who was born in Hong Kong and has a Master of Fine Art from the National Art School in Australia. Her work encompasses video, sound, painting, sculpture and installation. Through all these forms she explores contemporary society encouraging introspection about identity and human relationships.

All of her art is deeply informed by her personal experience as an immigrant. She challenges cultural narratives surrounding complex themes including immigration and cultural hybridity. She has exhibited in group exhibitions globally and has held solo exhibitions in Hong Kong, Sydney, Paris, London and Sheffield. Her 'artist in residence' experiences include the UK, Taiwan and Australia.

Pamela's work is held in the Casula Powerhouse Art Centre, also in the Dougherty Centre, Chatswood and in private collections in Australia, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Some Castlecrag friends of Pam, follow her career and appreciated the concept and humour in her first installation in 2016, at Articulate Project Space, Leichhardt. Titled 'Not Another Bloody Coffee Shop' we chuckled and shared her embedded statements while simultaneously being introduced to finding meaning expressed in 'installation art'. That seems long ago. Since then with an exciting array of work taking various forms, Pam won the '2018 Emerging Artist Award' Sydney. Early in 2023, Pam accepted an invitation to exhibit in Hong Kong

Her work was on display at Willoughby Council's exhibition *Entwined Within* at Art Space on The Concourse, 7 September - 1 October. A future exhibition titled, *Home and Away* will be held at 16 Albermarle Project Space, Newtown on 22 November. In August Pam began working as Artist in Residence with North Sydney Council.



The Fair is BACK !!



CASTLECRAG FAIR

SUNDAY
22 OCTOBER 2023

10AM-3PM
Around The Griffin Centre



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