

NEWSLETTER OF THE CASTLECRAG PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

No. 96

Seventy years of community development

November/December 1994

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Public Meeting re Castlecrag School

8pm Tuesday 22nd November 1994

Castlecrag Community Centre

(Corner The Postern and The Rampart)

*To discuss the Agreement between Castlecrag Community Inc.
and Glenaeon School*

*The Progress Association invites you to be brought up to date on
this very important matter!!*

BUSHFIRE AWARENESS MEETING

THURSDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 7.30PM

BAILEY HALL, WILLOUGHBY CIVIC CENTRE

Speakers will inform you of the best methods of preparing your home for the coming summer danger period. Last month Castlecrag had a warning when a large fire swept through bushland.

Expressway Committee Report

Eric Kaye

Our readers will be aware from recent press releases, that details of the six preferred options for the Warringah-Lower North Shore Transit Link are on public exhibition at Willoughby Library until 25 November. I urge our residents to view this exhibition, and submit their comments to the Department of Planning. Although none of the options any longer affect the suburb of Castlecrag, as motorists in the Lower North Shore area we are very much affected. The description of the six options is taken from the Department's document and I have identified this in italics. Options 1 and 2 are conventional rail, Option 3 light rail, and 4, 5 and 6 are Express Bus and other vehicles.

Option 1: Conventional Rail underground via Mosman and under The Spit. *This scheme consists of a 10.9 km railway line from North Sydney Station to Warringah Mall with train stations at Neutral Bay, Spit Junction, Balgowlah and Manly Vale. The entire length of the rail line would be underground, with a tunnel under The Spit. The estimated cost of this option is \$890 million and there are opportunities for private sector involvement. The advantages of this option include the opportunity for integration into the existing rail system, providing an improved public transport system to the Peninsula with greater cross-regional links, and reduced emissions from cars. Some of the disadvantages include the relatively high cost, the need to purchase property for the development of train stations, and the high cost of extending to Mona Vale.*

Option 3: Light Rail underground under Military Road. *This option involves a 10.9 km light rail system from North Sydney to Warringah Mall via Mosman. The entire length of the route would be underground with eight stations and a tunnel under the Spit. The estimated cost of this option is \$730 million and there are opportunities for private sector involvement.*

The advantages of a light rail system include increased public transport usage and the lesser cost compared with conventional rail. However, users would have to change transport modes at either end of the new system and this is a particular disadvantage.

I consider that these two options are the only ones which offer a satisfactory solution to the problem. Which one we should adopt, really comes down to the nature of the city we are looking for in the 21st Century. Both have a positive effect in encouraging development and concentration of population along their corridors.

Heavy rail has a stronger tendency to channel development along existing corridors. In this case it would encourage development of the existing CBD. Light rail, on the other hand, being new to our city and more flexible, could be extended to encourage development in other directions. In this regard, the Dept of Planning predictions indicate that by the year 2021, employment in the CBD will be reduced by 13% and in the Chatswood/St Leonards area, increased by 60%.

The problem of the need to change transport modes at either end could be largely overcome by an integrated ticketing system, and improved exchange facilities between modes and routes.

Option 2: *This option consists of a 9.8 km underground rail line from Chatswood Station to Warringah mall with train stations at East Roseville, Forestville and Frenchs Forest. The rail line would surface and cross middle Harbour on a bridge adjacent to the existing Roseville Bridge. The new bridge would be either partly or fully enclosed to reduce noise impact. The estimated cost of this option is \$780 million and there are opportunities for private sector involvement.*

I rule this option out because it involves a bridge across Middle Harbour.

Option 4: *This scheme involves a 6.5 km underground busway from Warringah Freeway to Burnt Bridge Creek deviation. The busway would not be accessible to private vehicles. The estimated cost of this option is \$325 million and there are opportunities for private sector involvement. The advantages of this option include its relatively low cost, its compatibility with the existing bus network and the relatively fast travel times to Sydney CBD destinations. The disadvantages are it may not attract as many new public transport users as some of the other public transport options, and it would have minimal impact on reducing traffic on Military Road.*

There may be support for this option from the residents of Manly-Warringah, however in my view its disadvantages exceed its advantages. I believe that international experience strongly reinforces this conclusion.

Options 5 and 6: Each of these options encourages the increased use of private cars with consequent increase in air pollution, road congestion and urban sprawl. All of this in my view contradicts the objectives of Sydney's strategic plan and these options should therefore be ruled out.

Zoning of our School Site

In a letter to the *North Shore Times* on 21/9/94 the Member for Willoughby, Peter Collins, claimed *inter alia* that "the Castlecrag School site was sold at an amount recommended by the Valuer-General". This valuation was based on the "assumption" that the State Government would rezone the site to "Special Purposes - School" as requested by Willoughby City Council and, finally, agreed to by the Dept of Education.

This vital step was **not** implemented by the Department of Planning - who had rezoned the site to medium-density in early 1990 **without** reference to Willoughby City Council - and the site was sold to a private school **without** the zoning restrictions on its use which would reduce the market potential of the site. Without rezoning, there are no "de facto" restrictions on the commercial value of the site as Mr Collins claimed and the price paid does not reflect the market value.

The refusal of the State Government to rezone the site to ensure its continued use as a school is at the centre of the Castlecrag community's concerns over this matter. Our member has failed to honour his promises and his assurances that the site would not be sold, and that its continued use for education would be protected.

Is it any wonder that there is so much resentment in the Castlecrag community about our disgraceful treatment by the NSW government on the matter of our School?

The **Public Meeting on Tuesday 22 November at the Community Centre promises to be a most interesting one. We would appreciate your attendance and your interest in the developments in the offer to Glenaeon of the site for one million dollars!! The final chapter in the long-running issue of the Castlecrag School has yet to be written!!**

Elizabeth Lander, President



*Seasons Greetings from the
President and the Committee
of the Progress Association*

Castlecrag Sports Club Inc. is enjoying perfect tennis weather.

At the moment there are vacancies for junior membership (under 18 years). The \$75 fee includes Saturday morning play and tuition. Associate members are also welcome to join at a cost of \$75 per year.

Now that daylight saving is upon us the courts are available each Wednesday 5pm to dusk for hire on a regular basis. If you wish to know more about access to the tennis facilities phone **Jill Highett on 958 6268** or post a letter to PO Box 2, Castlecrag.

Visitors fees (accompanied by member or associate)

Children under 16 years	\$2
Midweek visitors	\$5
Weekend visitors	\$10

Our Christmas party will be held in the clubhouse on December 10th 5-8pm. All are welcome (please bring a plate of finger food).

Uniting Church in Australia Northbridge - Castlecrag Parish

Rev. and Mrs Alan Wilson will be retiring from the Northbridge/Castlecrag Uniting Church Parish at the end of this year. A Closure Service will be held in the Northbridge Uniting Church at 10am on Sunday, 11th December followed by a light lunch. If you would like to attend this occasion please contact Elspeth McNair on 958 5695 before 30th November. Rev. Wilson's last official service will be on Christmas Day.

XXXXXXXXXX

The Progress Association is much in need of storage space in a friendly garage, to store trestle tables and a small amount of community property. Please ring Sue Randle on 958 6344.

GSDA No.1 Dwelling - 136 Edinburgh Road

A Progress Report

As work proceeds on this prominent residence, the first Griffin-designed house in Castlecrag, many Castlecrag residents have indicated to the Progress Association their dismay at what is happening under the Historic Houses Trust's (HHT) custodianship of GSDA No.1 Dwelling, saying they expected more of this authority whose responsibility is to protect our heritage. Others have suggested that HHT have adopted an excessively legalistic rather than an aesthetic approach to development of the property.

The No. 1 Dwelling "was the first of two stone houses built by the Greater Sydney Development Association, near the entrance to the suburb, as 'object lessons' of the physical form the Griffins intended for the suburb". "The two GSDA houses signal the entrance to the estate and are a local landmark". (*Building for Nature: Walter Burley Griffin and Castlecrag*. Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc. 1994) The two historic houses are important to many Castlecrag residents as the most visible examples of Griffin's architecture at the gateway to our suburb.

The No.1 Dwelling was acquired by HHT at auction in February 1993, as a temporary acquisition. "The intactness of the house, combined with the threat of development to a small house on a large allotment, prompted the Walter Burley Griffin Society to ask the Historic Houses Trust to buy the house. The Trust plans to 'conserve the house and then sell it with appropriate controls and covenants'" (*Building for Nature*). At the time of its acquisition, HHT made it clear that they would not keep the house, and would fund the restoration by building another structure (a 'pavilion' extension was suggested at the time) on the large block.

The Progress Association is delighted by the recognition of Griffin's architecture, but was apprehensive that the building of a new structure between the first two Griffin houses in Castlecrag would be too high a price to pay for the restoration of the original house.

During the following months, HHT developed a Conservation Plan for the property, and argued that under the State Government's Dual Occupancy legislation, the large block was vulnerable to future unsympathetic development and subdivision. They proposed that covenants would be placed on the property to protect the heritage of the No.1 Dwelling. At the same time, Willoughby Council was developing its Draft Heritage DCP 73 which nominated No.1 and No.2 Dwellings as items of State and Regional significance and which proposed that the historic Castlecrag/Griffin Estate should become a Conservation Area.

In November 1993 HHT submitted a Development Application (DA) to Council for both detached dual occupancy and subdivision of the site, with the size of the new block being 408 sq metres, just over the requirement for minimum block size for further subdivision or further dual occupancy development under current legislation. Also, they argued that the new dwelling should not "mimic" the existing Griffin houses. While HHT insisted that its planned development was "diminutive in scale and form", objectors were concerned that the interposing of a modern house between the two Griffin houses would diminish their heritage significance, and that subdivision would unnecessarily introduce a third party between the two historic dwellings with no interest in maintaining the character of the precinct.

The Progress Association strongly objected to the proposal as it believed that a dual occupancy development on a site so historically and environmentally sensitive, would create a most unfortunate precedent. It was concerned that the landscape which Griffin planned to be the dominant element, would be destroyed. Moreover, the proposed new building was not sympathetic to the style of the existing buildings or the streetscape (as required under Council's new Heritage Guidelines). The Association also objected to the deterioration of Griffin's plan of subdivision within the proposed Conservation Area under Council's new LEP. Council considered the arguments in great detail and concluded that the DA essentially complied with the then development guidelines.

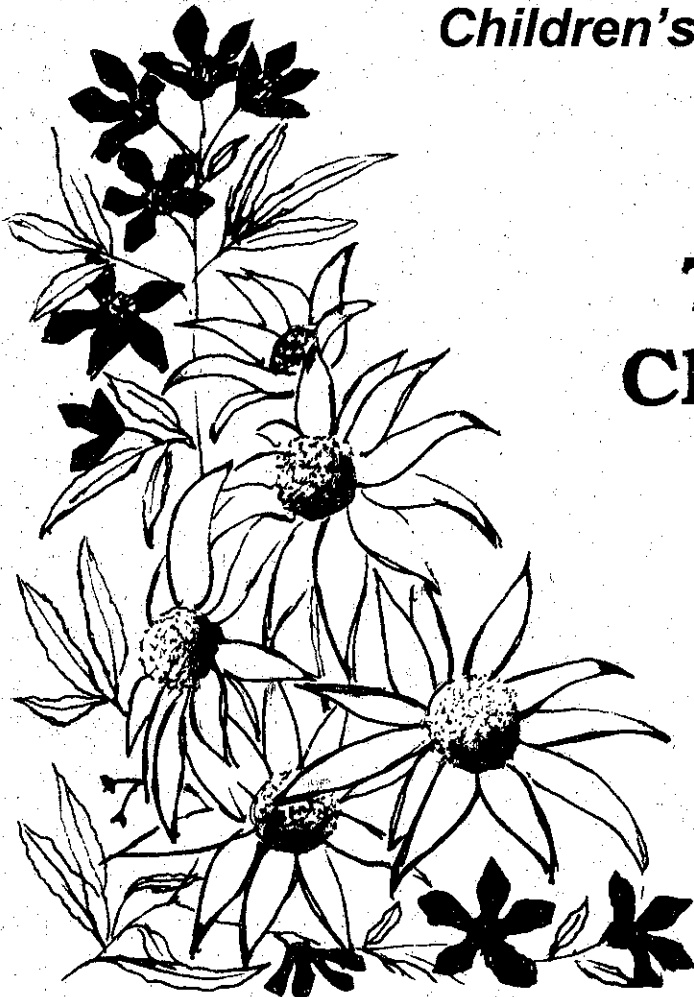
The Progress Association understands that the No.1 Dwelling is to be auctioned mid-December, and we are watching closely to see if HHT will honour its promise to place protective covenants and controls on the house before its sale. While it would be desirable for both houses to be bought by the same owner, to deflect the possibility of future development pressures on both the tiny Griffin house and the new modern structure, the completion of the separate dual occupancy development is not scheduled till late December.

Howard Rubie, Vice President

Willoughby City Council Housing Strategy

At the meeting of 31 October Mayor Cllr John Squire informed Council that the Dept of Planning had indicated that Council would receive the Section 65 Certificate within the following week. We understand that the Housing Strategy will again go on public exhibition but its draft form is effective to all future DAs.

Children's Page



Carols by Candlelight at The Haven 7.30 pm Christmas Eve



Free shuttle bus from the shops and school from 7.00 pm onwards
Candles available for purchase. Bring your own mozzie repellent.

Quiz:

The answers to these questions are the **names of streets or reserves** in the part of Castlecrag which Walter Burley Griffin designed. As you will discover, they all parts of a castle and some of them may be very close to your home.

1. A tall circular or square structure which is a place of defence.
2. A fortress which guards a castle.
3. A low wall which protects and conceals troops.
4. A defensive mounded area which protects or fortifies the castle.
5. A projecting part of the castle's fortification.
6. A platform from which guns fire.
7. An area which acts as a defence.
8. The inner wall of the ditch of the castle's fortification.
9. A port of refuge in the castle.
10. A grotesque spout that projects water.
11. An enclosed area within the castle.
12. A barrier obstructing a passage.

Try this Quiz!



In Castlecrag, walkways connect the reserves and allow easy and quick ways for you to cut across our long and sometimes steep roads. Try them!! We'll publish a map in the next newsletter. You probably don't know where all of these are so to help you find out, the Progress Association will be taking some more tours of discovery next Autumn. Would you like to join us? We'll give you details in another issue of **The Crag**.

CASTLECRAG LIBRARY

The Community Centre, The Rampart

TUESDAYS 3.30-4.30pm

THURSDAYS 1-5pm

SATURDAYS 10am-Noon

NEW BOOKS LIST:

DUNNETT, D	The Unicorn Hunt.
DALRYMPLE, W	In Xanadu - A Quest
CONRAN, S	Tiger Eyes
FYFIELD, F	Perfectly Pure and Good
CUSSLER, C	Inca Gold
GODDEN, R	Pippa Passes
ARCHER, J	Twelve Red Herrings
AMIS, K	Mr Barrett's Secret
PLAIN, B	Daybreak
KELLEHER, V	Where the Whales Sing
YELTSIN, B	The View from the Kremlin
LYALL, G	Spy's Honour
BROOKNER, A	A Private View
ST AUBIN de TERAN	A Valley in Italy
WALTERS, M	The Scold's Bridie
CRICHTON, M	Disclosure
CLANCY, T	Debt of Honour
HANSEN, D	Lunch with Mussolini
HAWKE, B	The Hawke Memoirs
LUSTBADER, E	Floating City
SHELDON, S	Nothing Lasts Forever

and a number of new paperbacks, mysteries, and children's books.

Willoughby Fun Fair

Thank you to all those who donated trash and treasure to the Progress Association's stall this year. Once again, it was very successful and \$1000 was raised, thanks to the mighty efforts of Kathy Burgess and her tireless team of helpers. The Progress Association also ran a cafe which was not such a great success, but we are wiser for the experience!! If you have an idea for an interesting stall at next year's fair, please contact us!!!

Residents living in Edinburgh Road near the shops have been irritated by children who drop empty bottles and sticky food wrapping into their gardens and letterboxes as they walk home. Please ask your children not to do this!!

L.J.HOOKER CASTLECRAG

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GOSSIPS

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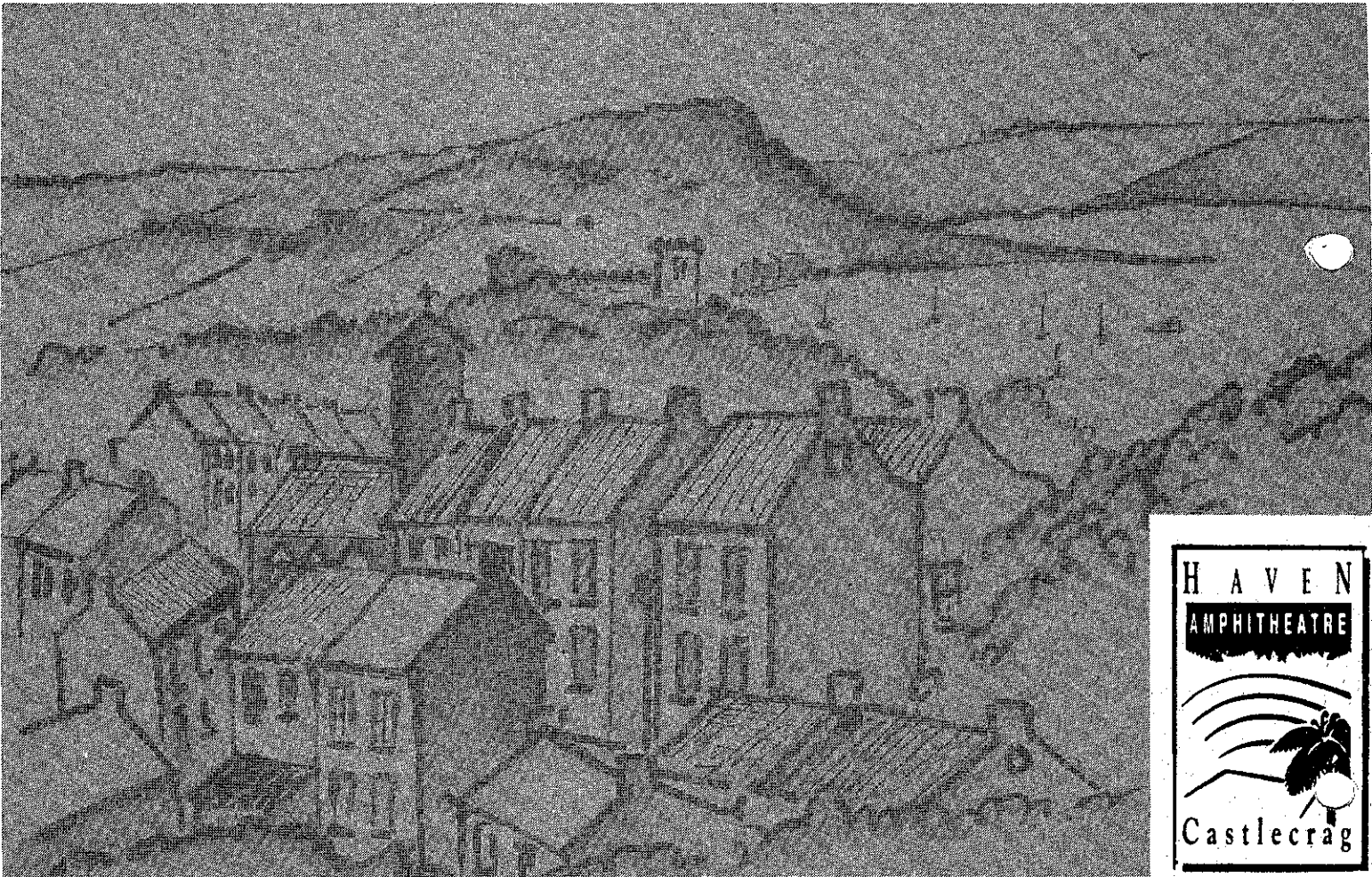
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This business is independently owned and operated by the proprietor Burley Griffin Real Estate P/L.

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BY DYLAN THOMAS

**AT THE HAVEN AMPHITHEATRE
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THE HAVEN AMPHITHEATRE IS SUPPORTED BY WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL**