

Return of the Reserves

This is not a story about the new Star Wars film. We have to leave that to the tabloids. Our story is about something wonderful that is happening in Castlecrag. After forty years, we have a working project between Willoughby City Council and a group of locals to bring our reserves and walkways back to what they were designed to be. The group is the Advisory Committee for Griffin Reserves and Walkways.

Many of us will remember the inception of this project, in 1996 when locals met with Council appointed consultants Meredith Walker and Michael Lehany, on a wet weekend. Walker and Lehany talked with residents at every reserve and walkway in Castlecrag and also spent more time mapping, photographing, observing and ultimately reporting their finds back to Council. We covered their report in issue 115 of *The Crag*, July/August 1997 and it was discussed at several CPA meetings.

The original intention

To understand the strategic importance of Castlecrag's reserves and walkways, we recapitulate the intention of the Griffins to create a "protected network of open spaces — which for the time was innovative and radically different from other suburbs", according to Professor James Weirick (Prof. Landscape Architecture, UNSW).

"When the Griffins created the Castlecrag Estate, one of the main aims was to conserve the significant landscape resources of this sandstone peninsula and to keep intact the existing forest canopy, by creating a continuous system of 'forest preserves' extending from the ridge to the harbour foreshores. No other development company in the history of this city has given such a fantastic gift to future residents..."

"Five principles were involved in the Griffin plan. One principle was to conserve the significant assets of the site — the stream corridors, rock outcrops, major cliff lines, major stands of vegetation, the entire waterfront in a series of reserves. The second principle was to use the reserves to provide direct pedestrian pathways down the contours to complement the roads winding around the slopes. The third principle was to site the houses as inter-related incidents in the bush, designed in harmony with the aesthetic qualities of the trees and rocks, with each room in each house having natural bushland views, and many with framed and filtered water views. The fourth principle was to provide opportunities for recreational activities: picnics, walking, childrens' play, community theatre. Finally, the fifth principle was predicated on the Griffins' belief that by sharing in the care of the reserves, good neighbourly relations would be fostered. A levy was placed on lot holders to maintain the overall network of open space."

Once were Walkways

Post-Griffins, the reality is that little happened to maintain these precious assets, except for a few areas weeded by aware residents. While Castlecrag was becoming a 'real suburb' from the war years on, we were mostly concerned with building houses and raising families and knew nothing about maintaining the reserves and walkways we lived next to. While we were busy planting honeysuckle, pampas grass and other exotic delights, we failed to notice they were choking the reserves, until we could no longer walk through them. In lower areas, The sewer line came through, causing a riot of lantana and other weeds. Some residents eventually tended to regard the reserves as an extension of their property, using them accordingly, chopping down trees and making lawns instead. Council did not carry through the obligation of the Deed of Trust and until it established bushland management in recent years, did nothing to maintain the reserves and walkways (except for the playing areas) held for the public interest.

Hopefully, we are more aware these days of the importance of keeping our special places alive. Our reserves have enticing names: The Gargoyle, The Oriel, The Embrasure, Watergate...

What does the Advisory Group do?

Committee members tend to walk the reserves as often as possible, to familiarise themselves with the problems, the features and to develop an eye for how they were originally and could be again. If work is about to happen, there is another inspection. The PoMs have a meeting every two months, discuss plans and progress with Council's Open Space Manager, Julie Whitfield and/or Bushland Manager, Alfred Bernhard and maybe Cr Sue Randle as well. They study Walker & Lehany's Plan of Management Report against their own observations and progress.

The committee is made up mostly of long-term locals. Most live next to reserves and are directly affected by them. Some committee people have major expertise on regeneration or flora or planning. Others have comprehensive local history knowledge or have tended reserves for years. Youth is represented by a university student doing an Honours thesis with relevance to the work being undertaken. This is a group of people who know what they are about and are working well together to create the best outcome for Castlecrag.

One PoM committee member, James Smallhom, says "we are trying to increase community awareness of the reserve system and its importance in the Griffin estate plan. Our main aim is to get Willoughby Council to invest and work on the reserves — which they never have until now. So ours is a dual role: of assessment and to act as a watchdog, that Council upholds its Government required Plan of Management. It's good having direct contact with Alfred Bernhard and Julie Whitfield — we get immediate response to issues brought up. The Castlecrag reserves have been budgeted for within Council's Open Space budget".

It helps to have great connections

Few people remember The Embrasure Reserve because it has been impenetrable for so long, but it is a reserve with potentially great connections for walkers between The Battlement, The Bastion and The Bulwark. For this reason, The Embrasure is first cab off the rank. Council has also appointed a landscape architect for the project and its officers have met with residents who adjoin the reserve, and are quite enthusiastic about the prospect of an outlook of indigenous vegetation replacing the weed jungle. A walking track to The Embrasure Reserve from The Bulwark will be re-opened as an uphill short-cut to The Bastion or The Battlement bypassing the dangerous corner joining those roads. Great for children. Walkers will also be able to pass from The Bastion via The Embrasure, The Gargoyle Reserve (which adjoins it) and on to The Oriel Reserve, there to go up to The Citadel or take the track with the renewed stone steps down to the Bartizan and hence to the upper end of The Bulwark.

A work in progress

James Smallhom described what was being done. "The Embrasure Reserve was choked with bamboo, privet, morning glory and just about every other nasty known to urban bushland. Council contractors initially went into The Embrasure to clear enough area to see what was there and then they did a pile bum. Major weed trees were removed which opened up the canopy." (NB: This type of attack is indicative of the dire state the area was in. Regeneration practice does not normally approach work in this way). "The landscape architect's report will look into

Community Bytes

Wining and Dining in the Crag

We seem to be building a reputation as a specialist wining and dining centre, previously lacking around this part of the North Shore. Much of the discussion has centred around Annie Parmentier's new Lunch Cafe in The Quadrangle, which opened on 26 March. Annie is a well-known Sydney restaurateur who established her name at the Bather's Pavilion at Balmoral beach. We understand there are plans to open in the evenings in the longer term. Across the road, Reg. Harris has taken over The Retreat Cafe and it is good to see that new decor and a fresh menu are attracting customers back once more. There is also new management giving good service in the Quadrangle's Patisserie and the Thai Terrace restaurant opened in Shop 2A of the Griffin Centre in late 1998. These are a welcome addition to the eateries already established.

For wine lovers, there have been dramatic improvements at Castlecrag Cellars at the Griffin Centre, as new proprietors, Anna and George Doukas and Paul Martinez are undertaking major renovations to the historic old store. The intention is to transform Castlecrag Cellars into a wine lovers' specialist store, featuring quality Australian Reds and Whites, including a great collection of back vintage wines, as well as an extensive range of affordable 'quaffers', beers and spirits.

It is all a far cry from the old days when you could hardly get a sandwich at Castlecrag shopping centre. These eateries will attract people to the centre, filter business to other specialty shops and breath new life into our commercial centre. We only await the installation of our new St. George multi-card ATM in the doorway next to the Video shop for complete convenience.

Historic Photos for Kindy

Castlecrag Kindergarten at the Community Centre is having a photo-drive so they can create a permanent photographic display of the early years of the Centre and Kindergarten. Photos relating to working on the building, adults involved and children at the Kindy would be welcome. If you would like to lend any photos that could be copied for the display, please phone Kindergarten Director, Kelly Slip on 9958 5393 (preferably between 3 and 5pm) or Marie Bassett on 9958 3408.

Griffin Exhibition going

Beyond Architecture, the marvellous exhibition of the work of Walter and Marion Griffin at Powerhouse Museum closes on 2 May. If you have not seen this exhibition, you are urged to do so before this date, as many of the items will be returned to the United States immediately following closure and the full exhibition will not be repeated.

Crag Gardens on the box

ABC TV Gardening Australia will feature the landscape architecture of Walter and Marion Griffin on Friday, 23 April (6.30pm). The program will explore the influence of the Griffins and their use of bushland and flora in their designs. It includes footage shot in Castlecrag on 23 March.

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Items from the CPA President

We held this year's AGM on a warm Sunday afternoon of 28 March; a meeting as cordial as the weather. Apart from election of committee, the meeting featured an outstanding presentation by Dr Jocelyn Chey on Australia-China linkages in history and present day, which has been much-mentioned since. It was a privilege to have a speaker of Jocelyn's calibre and our special thanks to her for such an interesting talk.

In my Annual Report to the meeting, I made reference to the efforts of Council, and the Traffic Engineer John Gill in particular, in initiating a consultancy to develop a Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Plan for Edinburgh Road and Sunnyside Crescent, Castlecrag.

The traffic study has followed a commendable process of public consultation, and the consultants have given a lot of time to detailed observations of local traffic issues. We now have recommendations for improvements in Castlecrag that well incorporate the views of residents. Also, a comprehensive technical assessment of problems which can be addressed by realistic measures. I believe the consultants' recommendations are practical. The Traffic Report will go on public display in May. See details in the insert this issue.

We have been seeking action on these traffic issues for over 30 years now. Finally, we have a chance to move from talk to *action*. If you want the concerns expressed in public meetings to be turned into reality, I recommend taking the time to study the report and give it your support, best given by writing to Council.

If we do not get behind the recommendations now, then I suppose we will still be talking about the problems in 30 years time.

Chatswood CBD Master Plan to go on display

Last July, *The Crag* (No. 121) reported that Council had appointed consultants to formulate a vision statement and strategic Master Plan for the future function, character and form of the Chatswood CBD. The consultants have now submitted the Master Plan and associated documents to Council and it is expected to go on public display shortly.

The Master Plan is underpinned by principles relating to the urban design and urban form issues of the CBD. These are:

- Access and circulation for pedestrians and motorists, with equity of access and safety, comfort and delight for pedestrians;
- Large-scale built forms that preserve daylight access to public spaces, create *foci* terminating critical vistas, do not overwhelm neighbouring properties, avoid creating windy conditions and give Chatswood a distinctive physical form;
- Land use that animates the public domain to ensure strong through movement through public spaces, encourage "slow" uses of the public domain, create natural surveillance of public space, encourage night-time use and give centrality to civic and communal functions;
- Streetscape: re-focus Chatswood onto its streets, re-direct the balance between pedestrians and vehicles in favour of pedestrian amenity, control building form to achieve pleasant and functional proportions, establish consistent materials for the real and *de facto* public spaces, and make the streets and plazas safe.
- Social Capital and civic life: promote social networks and trust within the community through urban design; foster the health and well-being of the community who use the centre; balance retail and commercial functions; and encourage uses that enhance the vitality and experience of the centre.
- Commerce: acknowledge Chatswood's national significance as a retail and corporate office centre.

The Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations believes the Master Plan to be an issue of crucial importance for all residents in Willoughby City and I am responsible for convening a shadow committee to review the various proposals put forward. While the key principles are generally sound, some of the proposals that are put forward in the Master Plan do not appear to be consistent with those principles. In particular, proposals for the redevelopment of the Chatswood Civic Centre contradict the strong views expressed at public forums on the CBD strategy and many of the basic principles.

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Hong Kong & Sydney

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND OTHER BRIDGES

EXTRACTED FROM AN ADDRESS TO THE PROGRESS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING GIVEN BY DR. JOCELYN CHEY

While visiting Melbourne last week, I was impressed to discover that Walter Burley Griffin's work in Australia included the Melbourne headquarters of the Chinese Nationalist Party (the Kuomintang). Clearly this work would have consolidated his relations with the Chinese investors whose two houses in this suburb have recently been added to the heritage register. All this started me thinking about links between Castlecrag and China, or more specifically, between Sydney and Hong Kong.

There have of course been Chinese people in Australia from the early days of settlement. The proportion of Chinese in the total population of Australia is probably about the same now as it was at the height of gold rush days in the 19th century. Hong Kong was the main departure point for the thousands of Chinese peasants who came to seek their fortunes. Most Chinese who came to Australia in the early days were indentured labourers to work for Chinese businesses already set up here. One third of the furniture makers in this country in the late 19th century were Chinese. Willoughby was one centre of Chinese market gardens supplying the city.

I have spoken to elderly people who remember from their youth Chinese carrying their vegetables to market with shoulder poles and baskets. They were the descendents of the first wave of Chinese settlement, labourers and artisans, almost exclusively men because of immigration restrictions. They came to the "New Gold Mountain to escape chaos and civil war in China, but did not find an easy life here. Most suffered discrimination or even persecution. Their activities were strictly circumscribed, but their government had no official representation in this country to speak on their behalf, being on the point of collapse itself.

Best estimate of ethnic Chinese in Australia today would be close to 500,000 nationally. Of these, over 200,000 live in New South Wales, mainly in Sydney. At the same time, more Australians have moved to study, live and work in Asia. Since China opened to the West at the end of the 1980s, the pace of economic development in that country has been impressive, averaging over 10 percent per year.

When I was posted to Hong Kong as Consul-General in 1992, there were around 30,000 Australians there, making it the largest centre of overseas Aussies outside Earls' Court. The Australian population of Hong Kong is now estimated at 45,000. This includes a large number of Australian ethnic Chinese. They include teachers, engineers, journalists, computer programmers, restaurant owners, jockeys and traders. Many are doing business in China, and use Hong Kong as a regional base for their operations.

Since I left Hong Kong three years ago, I have continued to keep in touch with developments there, as I write a weekly column, a kind of "Letter from Australia", for one of the Hong Kong newspapers. I am also completing a review of Australia/Hong Kong relations during the "handover period" of 1997/98 for publication later this year. I meet regularly with visitors from Hong Kong and China, and have contacts with the local Chinese community, which give me some opportunity to keep my finger on the pulse of Hong Kong.

Developments since 1997

Before the exit of the British administration in June 1997, many fears had been expressed about Hong Kong's fate. Commentators often described it as a "golden goose" that Beijing might kill in order to extract the golden eggs. With foreign exchange reserves of HK\$90 billion, and being responsible for 70 percent of all foreign investment in China and two thirds of all foreign trade, clearly Hong Kong was a valuable economic prize for Beijing. Interference from the central government was assumed to be inevitable, leading to restrictions on press and academic

freedom, corruption and nepotism and general politicisation of the community. As generally happens with forecasts, an entirely different and unexpected scenario emerged.

First there was the "bird flu" at the end of 1997, a mystery disease that affected chickens and ducks and was apparently communicable to humans. The Hong Kong government badly mishandled the crisis, forcing the slaughter of millions of poultry and spreading alarm throughout the community. Then there was an unseasonal outbreak of "fish flu" caused by algal bloom, affecting fish farms supplying live fish to the restaurants of the city, and cases of cholera traced to dirty water pumped into fish tanks from the polluted harbour. There were also several cases of bungled care in local hospitals, blamed on poor administration and a possible decline in professional standards of junior doctors. People began to feel distinctly edgy about the competence of their new Beijing-endorsed government.

Another matter much on the minds of Hong Kong people is the shortage and expense of housing. Imagine if you like, a city of eight million people in an area less than that between Port Jackson and Broken Bay, mainly steep rocky mountains. Each year the government added marginally to the land area by flattening some of the mountain tops and filling in some of the foreshore, then selling the land to developers who build a mix of subsidised public housing and private residential developments. In the last decade, housing did not keep pace with the growth in population, currently averaging 3% per annum. As a result, property values skyrocketed, creating a bubble economy and boosting company stock assets, since most of the companies listed on the Hang Seng stock exchange are involved in property development. Then in the first six months of last year, the bubble burst, wiping off around half of the paper value of the stock exchange. Most people were affected, since a large proportion of households have some of their savings in stocks and shares.

In October 1997, the Hong Kong dollar had come under attack from international speculators, in the wake of the crisis that originated in Thailand in the middle of the year. Hong Kong currency is pegged to the US dollar, making it vulnerable to attack. After successive attempts to shake the HK dollar, the Chinese government intervened, making it clear that China's own deep reserves were available to add to those maintained by the Hong Kong government. Eventually the hedge funds withdrew, realising that they could not defeat this combined force. This decision has been welcomed internationally, because it provides some stability in the uncertain economic climate, but it leaves Hong Kong with the problem of high costs when all its neighbours whose currencies had been devalued had suddenly become much cheaper.

Hong Kong people also have increasing concerns about the deterioration of the environment. The air quality is poor because of the widespread use of diesel, and is affected by construction and industry across the border in China. Respiratory complaints are increasing. The government gives daily bulletins, advising precautions to be taken. Water quality has also decreased. Beaches are frequently closed for swimming and fish found in the harbour smell strongly of petrol.

Although Hong Kong people have traditionally been prepared to move their base from one part of China to another, or even internationally, faced by gloom and economic uncertainty in 1998, most people had no option but to grit their teeth and stay where they were. At the same time, most western countries, including Australia, imposed new restrictions on immigration.

Hong Kong businesses are in a tight spot, with rising costs, difficult markets, reduced capital and less borrowing capacity. Although in the

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Hong Kong & Sydney (continued)

past Hong Kong has been one of the largest sources of foreign investment for Australia, few Hong Kong companies are able at this point of time to consider new investments here or elsewhere. On the contrary, some have disposed of their existing investments here in order to meet pressing needs back home. As Asia pulls out of its present difficulties, Hong Kong will return to its former pre-eminent position as a provider of investment capital, but this will take time. The Australian government also has to take seriously the concerns of possible investors. While in Hong Kong, I did talk to many company executives about the investment climate in this country. Australia's strongest selling point is its stability. On the other hand, unless immigration quotas are increased, the Australian market will remain static, and our population will continue to age, making this country less attractive to foreign investors.

Environmental awareness

In the face of almost unbearable damage, the environmental lobby is growing not only in Hong Kong but also in China. I believe that when China eventually opens up its country to outside inspection, it will be shown to have as serious environmental problems, due to inbuilt weaknesses in centrally planned economies dependent on Soviet-style heavy industry. In Hong Kong, under the greater freedoms allowed to the Special Administrative Region, popular concerns are aired fairly freely. In fact, there have been protests about environmental issues for more than ten years, beginning with mass petitions and marches aimed (unsuccessfully) at preventing the construction of a nuclear power plant just across the border in China.

More than 70 percent of the land area of Hong Kong is scheduled as nature parks, with restrictions on economic usage. These parks are treasured by local people. Photographers, bird watchers and hill walkers are among some of their frequent visitors. Foreigners resident in Hong Kong sometimes deride the superficial interest of local people in conservation issues, but from my observation, they are not more backward in understanding than the average Australian. Their lack of direct participation I believe stems from a fatalistic belief that the problems are too large and imponderable, therefore impossible to resolve. Hong Kong people also have not had much experience of the freedom to exercise democratic rights in demonstrations and direct action — the British only gave them very belated and partial self-government before returning the territory to Chinese rule.

Because of this background, when settled in Australia, Hong Kong people take some time to learn their new civic rights and responsibilities. I would like to see the Australian government give more advice and assistance to all new residents about how to live in harmony with our environment. The Australian bush appears to be forbidding and hostile to new settlers, full of dangers such as venomous snakes and spiders, and it is not easy to learn to appreciate it. People who have spent their formative years living in a high-rise urban situation have added difficulty adapting to life with a distant horizon, or even a suburban block. There are also some cultural factors that must be overcome, including pseudo-scientific *feng shui* beliefs. I am encouraged to hear that the Castlecrag Progress Association is preparing a kit to educate new residents about local history and environment. I hope that it will include at least a summary in Chinese language. In this way, I am confident that the energies and resources of the Australian Chinese community can be fully utilised for the benefit of our precious peninsula.

Jocelyn Chey

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Return of the Reserves (continued)

the feasibility of replanting with indigenous tube stock versus natural regeneration possibilities".

"There was evidence of original sandstone steps and pathways into The Embrasure. The committee thinks it is important that The Embrasure has a two-way access. Since we have started working we've seen primary work undertaken in The Embrasure followed up by an action plan which was undertaken with consultation with all the residents".

"We also think that a walkway could be opened along the Castlehaven Reserve (from The Barricade to The Scarp). It will just be a narrow foot track along the existing sewer line. The track will make it easy to facilitate weeding maintenance." James Smallhorn also mentioned the PoMs' concern over clearing of reserve areas by residents, a matter being taken seriously in Council quarters.

Community involvement

Although the major part of PoM project work will be undertaken by Council contractors, there is much that can be done by us, the residents. Residents have already done wonders in the Mills Point Lookout Reserve in Edinburgh Road. This is a Landcare project, where anyone can turn up on the appointed days (once a month or so) and learn the basics of regeneration practice, while helping to turn a messy area back into its natural beauty. There is another active group working in the Linden Way Reserve along with contractors, and organised by Alfred Bernhard. Willoughby Council can also organise National Trust contractors to work with residents on a particular site. Caring for bushland creates a personal sense of pleasure as you weed, watch natives sprout and grow and wait for birds to return.

Ultimately, the ongoing success of the PoM project will rely largely on our co-operation — by not planting species in our gardens capable of invading the reserve and learning about good weed control methods. By being respectful of bushland areas, not cutting new tracks and not dumping garden rubbish or lawn clippings in reserves or gutters.

The restoration of our reserves and walkways is the most major community project to be undertaken in Castlecrag in many years. Regeneration is no overnight success story. The worst areas mean hard and tedious work in which machinery plays no part.

The glittering prize is the re-linking of the reserves and walkways in the Griffin conservation network.

Adele Barnett

with assistance from James Smallhorn and the Advisory Committee

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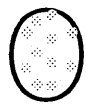
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Powering on



One of life's little niggles is the quarterly power bill. A heavy duty bill can give you a bad hair day, postpone car servicing and cause the kids to slink off to their rooms, awaiting the yell to 'turn off all those lights'. So before you contemplate becoming a 'power nazi', read about the tips energy consultant Max Mosher has to offer, extracted from his talk at the recent Castlecrag Conservation Society AGM.

Max has worked in energy industry for twenty years; at the Department of Energy, the Energy Information Centre and SEDA (Sustainable Energy Development Authority). Now he runs his own consultancy; *Comfy House Design*. Max also does training courses for councils (including Willoughby), and designers, architects and developers on "Minimal Energy Performance Requirement". As a pre-emptor, Max Mosher notes that our reliance on energy has changed dramatically from early days to the point where lifestyle is dictated by energy and refers to the gas plant explosion in Victoria in 1998 and the effect it had on the State.

Max delivers some statistics: Only one percent of transport energy is coming from electricity. Industry uses 45%, commerce uses 5.9%, transport uses 37.7% and homes use 10.0% — almost twice as much energy as commercial usage.

The single home appliance that uses most energy is the hot water system (HWS) at 27.2% of our consumption. A shower uses around 10 litres of water per minute at a good flow rate. If you want to know how much water your shower uses per minute, hold a jug under the shower head for 6 timed seconds, then multiply the quantity by 10. Unfortunately the use of solar hot water has not been encouraging because of the system purchase price. At \$2,500 you save around \$100 per annum, so it is a 15 year pay-back. Gravity feed HWS' are very durable. They are still made of copper and can last for 50 years, as opposed to the normal HWS lifespan of 8-10 years. The problem with gravity feed systems is poor water pressure, so placement is all important. Currently, Australian Standards allow HWS to lose one third of their heat in a 24 hour cycle — say if you are away for a day. New minimum standards requirements for design are needed and are on the way.

The most favoured electric HWS is the off-peak system: The power stations experience morning and afternoon peaks in electricity consumption. They take around 4 hours to come up and slow down from peak periods. Now power stations have to be run at all times to cater for all the off-peak demand. So with off-peak power consumption at one third of the peak price, power stations are running at a loss. What will happen if electricity is privatised? For the last 8 years, consumers have benefited from artificially frozen charges. If the off-peak tariff goes up to cover costs, we will pay \$400 per year — twice the amount of \$200 it is now for an average off-peak HWS. At this rate, the solar panel price is looking more attractive, because it would then be paid off in 5 years.

Short tips for cheaper bills

- Use a flow restricting shower nozzle;
- Think about substituting solar next time you buy an HWS (these days they don't look so bulky on the roof);
- Restrict kitchen appliances to those you really need (do you really need to use an automatic orange juice squeezer or egg beater?), but it is better to cook toast in a toaster than a griller and boil water in a jug than on the stove;
- When installing a gas or electric HWS, put it next to the linen press (it will keep linen fresh and dry) and definitely not outside the house. Have it close to the kitchen, where you use the most hot water in short bursts;
- Do not connect your dishwasher to the HWS unless the HWS is almost next door or above the dishwasher, or it will fill up with cold water from the pipes and then have to heat the water anyway. It is actually cheaper to have a cold water connection;

Cooking

Max Mosher is an advocate of the Microwave oven. They use one

third of the energy to cook the same food used by a normal stove or appliance. Microwaves do not linger in the atmosphere. They only make water molecules vibrate. All the energy in a microwave is directed straight at the food inside. Max uses a combination type that can do fan-forced cooking. You can learn to cook food comparably well in a microwave, he attests.

He regards ovens as a waste of energy because ovens heat everything else first and lastly, the food. As for cooktops, Halogen cooktops are efficient, using infra red with electric coils. The ceramic glass tops are easy to use and clean. There is little difference in running costs between gas and electricity. We use around 10% of household energy for cooking.

Space heating

We have often been told that open fires (while they look great) are a waste of heat. In fact 90% of that heat goes up the chimney. Slow combustion stoves are relatively effective, but are terrible air polluters. In Canberra winters, 50% of particle emission is from wood-burning appliances.

Max recommends that you don't buy a heater with a timer. Anything that takes a long time to respond is inefficient heating. Oil filled column heaters are the worst. Fan heaters are OK if they blow hot air at you, not up to the ceiling. Use them as a personal heater.

Gas heating has low running costs — better than electric heaters — and they are efficient, but exhaust is a problem if heaters are unflued, because of noxious CO₂ and water vapours.

For example: a Vulcan Conray electric heater puts out 8 megajoules of heat, whereas a gas heater puts out 17 megajoules of heat but is also putting a kilo of water in the air per hour. All-day running means 10 kilos of water in the air. However, if ducted, all exhaust goes outside. If you have reverse cycle system, use it both summer and winter. It is cheaper than buying a gas heating system.

Lighting

Compact fluorescents use one fifth the energy of normal lighting. The lamp will cost \$20, but lasts 8 times longer. It is best to use them in rooms where lights are on for long periods of time because they can run for 10 hours for less than 1 cent. Compact fluorescents now come in a 26 shades, including a variety of 'whites'. No mono phosphors and low glare factors. Max recommends the brands of Osram, Philips and Wotan.

Halogen lights use more energy than incandescents because they are made with a conical reflector, so you need to install more of them than other lights and have to run a transformer per globe. Another problem is that you cannot insulate the ceiling where halogen insets are because there must be a decent gap around them, resulting in 'moon craters' around the insulation in your roof, so they create heat conflict problems if mounted into the ceiling. Halogens are better as track or swivel lights fixed below the ceiling.

Home energy efficiency

Max Mosher says any house design can be made a passive solar energy design, reducing heating and cooling requirements. The more mass there is in house construction, the longer it takes to heat up. The usual passive solar designs include concrete floor slabs and thermal mass walls, verandahs to the west, rooms which can be closed off for heating and window placement for cross ventilation.

With regard to cooling: did you know that sun coming through glass is 1,000 watts per hour, per square metre? Shade the glass, make eaves wider; one metre is enough. The use of flexible 'blades' in verandah ceilings can deflect and direct sun and breezes.

Roofing and Insulation

Cement versus terracotta tiles — they are not glazed anymore and break down. An iron roof should last 30-50 years, most fail from internal corrosion. With a correctly installed roof and insulated ceiling there is no difference in solar performance between tile and iron.

There was much more information delivered by Max in his talk than could be transcribed, and during supper he was kept busy giving out brochures and free advice re home problems. It must be the same for him as it is for doctors when they meet people at gatherings: "I have this gap in my batten joints".....

For brochures or more information on appliances, passive solar design and energy efficiency, call the SEDA referral service on (02) 9319 0022 or Max Mosher at Comfy House Design.

Editor

NEXT CPA GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 27 April 1999, 8pm

at the Community Centre, The Postern

Agenda:

FORUM: THE MILLENNIUM BUG
CASTLECRAG TRAFFIC STUDY
REPORT ON CHATSWOOD CBD

The Millennium Bug Forum will be opened after the normal and agenda items of business. Non-members are most welcome to attend and contribute.

The CPA Committee 1999: President: Bob McKillop
Vice Presidents: Howard Rubie and David Harrop
Secretary: Elizabeth Lander, Committee: Andrew Kirk, Diana Jones, Adele Barnett, Gay Spies, John Steele, Kate Westoby.

Items from the CPA President (continued)

We will keep you informed regarding public exhibition of the Master Plan and the associated public workshops that Council intends to conduct. I urge Castlecrag residents to make their voice heard in the important matter.

I can also advise that Council is reviewing its procedures for DA Approvals. Overall, the intention is to establish clear-cut procedures that are transparent and accountable. One concern raised by the Federation of Willoughby Progress Associations is that, in many cases, negotiations over controversial developments are carried out to the extent that applicants are "locked into" a particular position before it enters the public arena. A recommendation by Council officers to encourage applicants to make a presentation to interested parties at the earliest possible time prior to assessment was to go to Council on 12 April.

Bob McKillop

momo

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The Millennium Bug: Acting Locally

Nobody knows what it will really precipitate, but we know that 'the bug' has the potential to create problems on a local and global scale, both acute and ongoing.

We hear senior spokespeople of major services assuring us they will have their computer systems 'in compliance' by New Year's Eve, and we hope they are right. We also hear that some computer techs. working on 'the bug' are not so confident. You may have already decided that your family will have a line of preparation 'just in case'. Because this is a situation without historical precedent (and some irony in type and timing), there are no definitive experts in the field we can refer to.

While not advocating any particular position on the Millennium Bug, the CPA considers it would be worthwhile to hold a discussion forum at the next General Meeting. All interested persons are encouraged to attend and offer information, positive ideas and suggestions on:

- What households could do to prepare for possible 'upsets' and how to go about it: i.e. a 'family package'
- What organisation might be needed in our community to co-ordinate assistance programs for the unwell, frail and aged

The forum may also provide some assessment as to what level of confidence prevails in the community that the new Millennium will be experienced without much in the way of glitches.

Editor

Moran Realty



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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership fee is \$10 per person (\$5 for students and those on a fixed income). Membership is for the calendar year and is renewable from 1 January 1999. Members must be at least 18 years of age.

Name: _____ \$ _____ Signature: _____
Name: _____ \$ _____ Signature: _____
Name: _____ \$ _____ Signature: _____
Address: _____ Donation: _____ \$ _____

Our Constitution stipulates that a member of the Association must be a natural person who is a resident or ratepayer of the area (designated in Rule 1.3) being over the age of 18 years and has been approved for membership of the Association by the Committee. Two months membership is obligatory for a member to be eligible to vote. The names of the people applying for membership should be supplied with the membership fee. A person who was a member in 1997 will automatically be eligible to vote in 1998 as soon as the 1998 membership is paid (as long as the qualifying period has elapsed). A 'family' cannot be a member because a 'family' is not a real person. If a company owns a property in Castlecrag, then the directors of the company do not qualify for membership of the Association if they live outside Castlecrag.