

Council Officer gets a Gold Star

Landscape Architect and long-serving Officer of WCC Jan Felton recently retired, leaving an indelible mark on Castlecrag. She had a passion for preserving and maintaining the Griffin legacy and felt strongly connected to their ethos, particularly Marion's.

Her first project in Castlecrag was well before she was employed by Council. In the early 70's Jan was studying Architecture at UNSW and worked with Lecturer Col James and other students on a traffic-calming plan for the straight part of Edinburgh Road, which was known as a bit of a dragstrip. Despite considerable community support, Council did not adopt that plan.

Jan was appointed Community Projects Officer at WCC in 2008. Her overarching role in Castlecrag was as Convenor of the Griffin Reserves Advisory Group. Jan worked closely with community representatives for many years to implement and update the Griffin Reserves Plan of Management.

These achievements have included improvements to reserves and walkways to make them more easily accessible such as

the path between Tower Reserve and The Citadel; vegetation design and management, including the removal of exotic weeds and the planting of local indigenous species; and the placement of seating allowing users to appreciate spaces and existing views. Jan co-ordinated many biennial Griffin Reserves Open Days to connect community members, encourage residents to take an active interest in their neighbouring reserves, and to raise awareness of and participation in the council's Bushcare volunteer program.

Jan has been responsible for the site design of a number of parks and reserves in the Crag, including the Stoker Playground with its focus on natural materials. She also designed the landscape plan for the Haven Amphitheatre after the stage was demolished, creating ledges, steps and a lower performance ring which enabled the theatre troupe *Come You Spirits* to utilise so brilliantly during their performances over the last couple of years.



(L to R) Jan Felton, Jutta, Bronwyn & Garth at Jan's MGP's farewell lunch

Jan also developed the Willoughby Walks program with maps and an audio version, and designed the QR code plate and illustrated it with a hand-sketched Angophora, which give interpretive information at various locations around the suburb, showing she is quite the artist! She also worked with the Community Gardens in Willoughby City. Her handprints are all over the place!

Jan's dedication to her work has enriched the local environment and our quality of life. She has left very big shoes to fill. We wish her a well-deserved, healthful, long and fulfilling retirement.

Vandalism at Tower Reserve

Casuarinas, kunzeas and homelanthus snapped or broken; bark stripped from a melaleuca; branches we had placed to protect tree saplings dragged about; deep scratches in the bark of an angophora – this is some of the damage to the bush in Tower Reserve found by the Bushcare group and reported to Council.

The Reserve is a splendid place for children to play and we welcome this, but hope they will respect the plants, animals and birds. On a recent weekend some boys set up a zip line from the rocks of the Tower and erected a tent in a kunzea grove. Passing by on my daily walk through the Reserve, I pointed out places where branches had been placed to protect some seedlings and asked them to take care not to damage them, also to pick up plastic



that was strewn about and tidy up before they left. The next day I found they had not done this. I also discovered damage to some trees and reported everything to Council.

The tent and ropes were confiscated by Council. The boys returned to find everything had been cleared up. They left a notice taped to the angophora - "Return Our Materials". They should put this request to Willoughby Council.

The Tower Reserve Bushcare Group has been in action for more than ten years. Before

it began work, this part of the Reserve was impenetrable due to jasmine and honeysuckle vines. Having cleared fishbone fern and trad from the area, we have made space for lots of trees to regenerate including Angophoras and Callitris. Tiny orchids flower on the rocks. Bandicoots are everywhere. Occasionally the Reserve is visited by wallabies and a lyrebird.

From the highest point of the Tower, you can look out past the Heads to the ocean or watch the New Year fireworks. Children can climb and jump happily. We simply ask them to respect all plants and animals.

Jocelyn Chey

