

<b>Name:</b>	Castlecove golf course
<b>Other name/s:</b>	Castlecove Country Club
<b>Location:</b>	Deepwater Road, Castle Cove NSW 2069
<b>Designer:</b>	Walter Burley Griffin
<b>History:</b>	<p>While Griffin initially gave priority to developing the Castlecrag Estate, he saw the opportunities offered by the largest parcel of GSDA land on the Little Sugarloaf peninsula (406 acres) during his first visit to the site in early 1921.</p> <p>The provision of golf links in the form of a 'Country Club' was familiar to Griffin as a feature of advanced urban design in the US, and he promoted such courses in the estates he planned for the GSDA from 1922. He wrote: "larger reserves which face the public ways and waterways are for the use of the suburb as a whole. ... The organising of the chief one, the Country Club, is already in hand".</p> <p>By November 1924, Griffin was planning to set aside 100 acres of this GSDA land parcel (which he had named 'Castlecove') for a golf course. Challenges relating to the Castlecrag Estate remained a priority, however, and it was not until November 1928 that Edgar Deans (GSDA company secretary) advised shareholders that "Work is progressing with contouring several sections of the Castlecove Peninsula ... for the purpose of a Golf Club".</p> <p>The diversion of GSDA resources to the golf course generated conflict between Griffin and a group of Melbourne shareholders led by Charles John Cerutti, the Commonwealth Auditor-General. Nevertheless, the GSDA promotional booklet produced around 1929 stated: "The Golf Links, which have been surveyed for construction, will offer a sporting course of 18 holes within 5 miles of the heart of Sydney". Griffin's landscape plan for the Castlecove Estate (of 13 September 1929) showed the golf course as a central feature of a network of walkways and reserves.</p> <p>Development of the course had commenced by May 1931, when Griffin entered into a contract with Mr FB Green to construct the facility. In response to opposition to the project by Cerutti and his Melbourne backers, Griffin transferred Eric Nicholls to Sydney and established a Sydney-based GSDA Board with Nicholls as chairman, while Griffin's majority 'A-class' shares were used to authorise this board to oversee contracts and expenditure on the project.</p> <p>The board minutes and reports to Cerutti by Edgar Deans document the development of the course</p>

during 1931 and early 1932. Detailed landscape plans for the course do not appear to have survived, but it is evident that Griffin met with Green on a regular basis to guide the construction activities. Griffin's design for the delightful small, but highly innovative clubhouse with concrete domed roof and rustic stone walls, received a council building permit during 1931.

The course, the first in the Willoughby Municipality, was formally opened on 12 April 1932 with Edgar Deans being given the honour of being the first to tee off. Deans became the enthusiastic manager of the golf course with FB Green being retained as the caretaker to maintain the facility, assisted by a part-time labourer. By July 1933, Eric Nicholls had formally established the Castlecove Country Club, which then had a membership of 130.

John ('Jack') Joseph Hagar was appointed as the Country Club's professional around 1942 and he subsequently leased the course from the GSDA in partnership with a fellow golf professional, Archie Keane. Hagar was appointed manager of the Castlecove Country Club in 1952-53 and remained in this position until the club was formally incorporated in 1956-57.

The Country Club suffered a major blow in July 1957 when fire destroyed the clubhouse and all it contained. Members rallied to convert the corrugated iron machinery shed into a temporary clubhouse by the following weekend and play continued.

Following the transfer of the GSDA land in Castle Cove to a subsidiary of LJ Hooker Limited, the long-term future of the course was finally secured in July 1959 when extensive negotiations between Council, LJ Hooker, Cumberland Country Council and the Castlecove Golf Club culminated in an agreement regarding the future of the course. LJ Hooker would sell three lots of land amounting to 24 acres to Council at the lowest price (estimated to be £6000) and the club would buy four lots. The club would develop a country club with extensive facilities, including a swimming pool, putting greens, dining room and some accommodation. A substantial club house designed by the well-known architect and Castlecrag resident, Harold Smith, was subsequently constructed on the site.

Sources:

CJ Cerutti papers, University of Melbourne Archives, 1990.0096.

Griffin, Walter Burley, 'Picturesque Waterside Suburb: scenic charm of Castlecrag,' *Australian Home Builder*, no.1, August 1922, p.51.

	<p>Jeff Turnbull &amp; Peter Y. Navaretti (eds.), <i>The Griffins in Australia and India</i>, Melbourne University Press, 1998, pp 179-314-315.</p> <p>Esther Leslie, <i>The Development of Castle Cove and Middle Cove</i>, Chatswood, Willoughby Municipal Council, 1988, pp 75-78.</p> <p>Plan of Management: Castle Cove Park and Castle Cove Golf Course', Willoughby City Council, 1996.</p>
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The development of model waterside estates that integrated with the landscape became the passion of both Walter and Marion Griffin and the development of a 'Country Club' based around a golf course was a core element of their vision for the Middle Harbour headlands, promoted from the earliest days of the GSDA venture in line with advanced 'garden suburb' design principles of that era in the United States.</p> <p>The golf course at Castle Cove was created within an attractive bush setting characterised by sandstone rock formations, indigenous trees and shrubs. The conservation of such settings through sensitive suburban development was the distinguishing feature of Walter Burley Griffin's vision for the headlands stretching from Castlecrag to Castle Cove.</p> <p>The original rustic sandstone clubhouse designed by Griffin was located on a prominent knoll overlooking the course. It was tragically destroyed by fire in July 1957. As with golf courses in general, the fairways and greens have been subjected to various alterations over the years. Nevertheless, the bushland setting of the course envisaged by Griffin has been retained.</p>
<b>Heritage listing:</b>	<p>In its 1996 'Plan of Management: Castle Cove Park and Castle Cove Golf Course', Willoughby City Council rated the park and golf course to be of local and district significance. The parks were noted as: 'a buffer between houses and enhance the high quality parkland character of the suburb'.</p> <p>Further assessment of its heritage significance is currently being undertaken. This is based on the role of a Country Club as a core element of the model suburbs that Griffin designed and developed on the GSDA land located on the Middle Harbour foreshores.</p>
<b>Statutory controls:</b>	Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012
<b>Consent authority:</b>	Willoughby City Council
<b>Previous heritage reports:</b>	

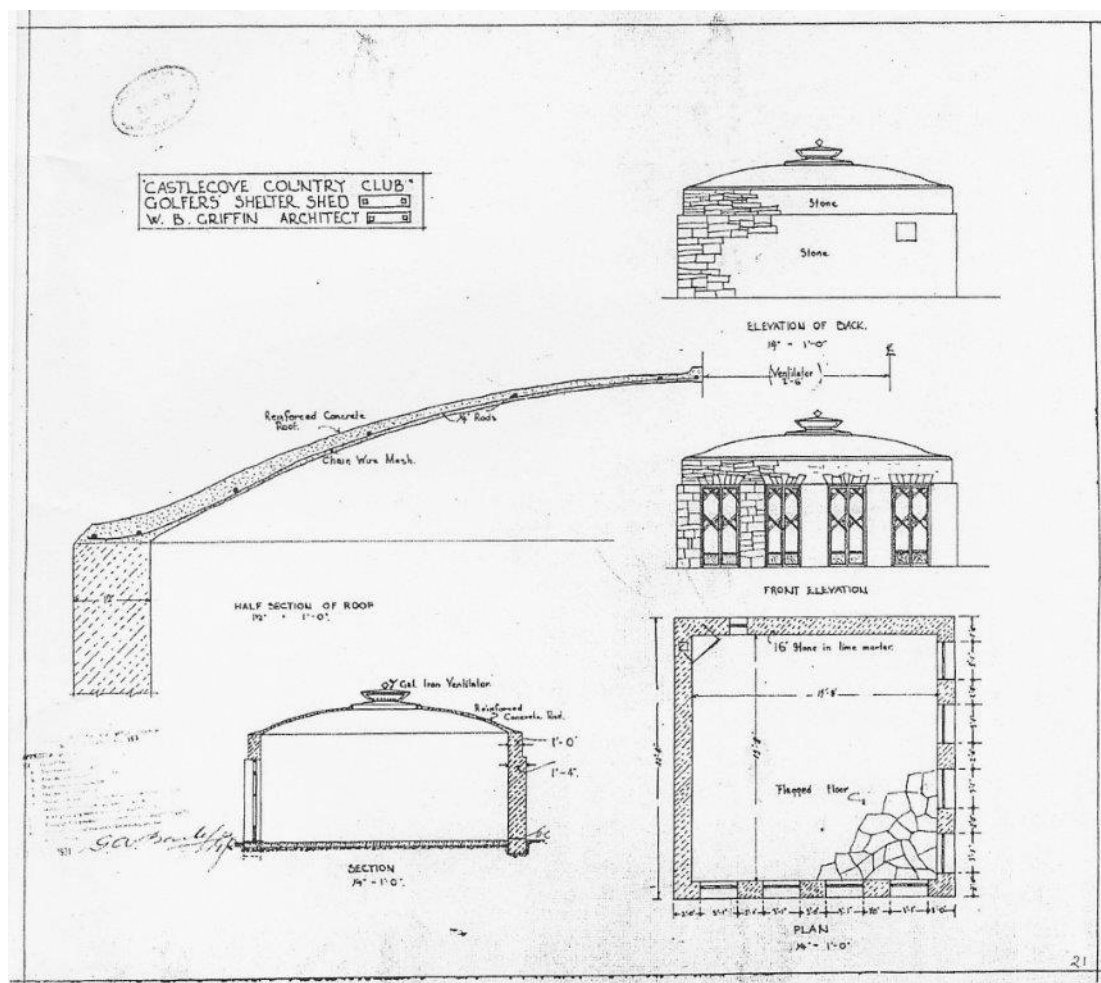
**Image:**

1. WB Griffin's plan for the Castlecove Country Club golfers' shelter shed, 1931, Willoughby City Council.
2. Edgar Deans hits off to officially open the golf course on 21 April 1932. Courtesy Deans family, Walter Burley Griffin Society.
3. Golfers on the 8th green of the Castlecove golf course in the 1940s with the clubhouse on the knoll in the background. WDHS collection, donated by Mr & Mrs E Maher.

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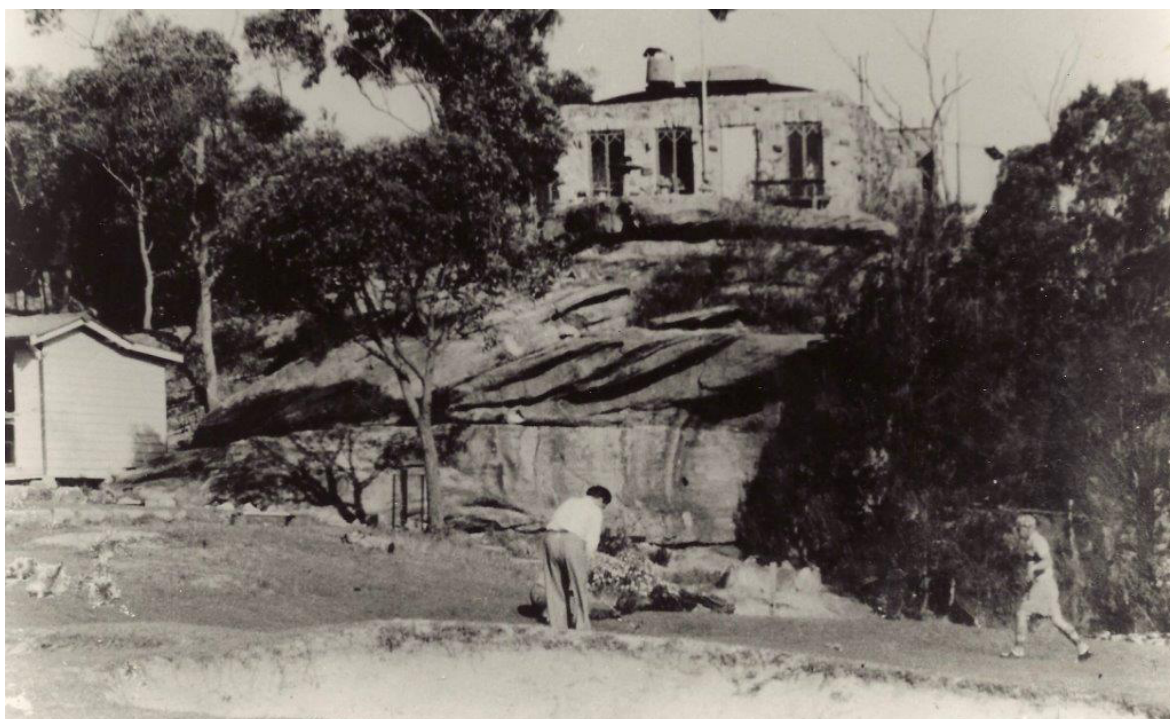
Information for this item on this inventory last modified: 2013, September 20.



WB Griffin's plan for the Castlecove Country Club golfers' shelter shed, 1931, Willoughby City Council.



Edgar Deans hits off to officially open the golf course on 21 April 1932. Courtesy Deans family, Walter Burley Griffin Society Collection.



Golfers on the 8th green of the Castlecove golf course in the 1940s with the clubhouse on the knoll in the background. WDHS collection, donated by Mr & Mrs E Maher.