Campaigning against a 'Bare-Maris'

By Ashok Verma

CATH Carroll, 96, says her fight "to save Beaumaris from becoming a Bare-Maris" has been the biggest achievement of her life.

Mrs Carroll, a founding member of the Beaumaris Conservation Society, will be a guest of honour at its 50th anniversary celebrations on October 5.

Mrs Carroll's face lights up when she takes a trip down memory lane.

"Dunlop Rubber Co. had put up for sale over 1000 hectares of land in late 1952," she said.

"It was an area of great natural beauty with nice foliage and rare trees. Developers were quickly buying the land and they started chopping down trees, our great asset.

"It was a great pity as they were destroying the suburb. Three of us (including her late husband John Gerard Carroll) got together to do something about it."

The society, formed in 1953, was called the Tree Preservation Society, but changed to its present name in 1970.

Its members pasted leaflets on trees showing two images. One was of a house with a tree in front and the headline "Beaumaris". Underneath was a second picture of a house without any tree and the headline "Bare-Maris".

"That was the way we conveyed our message to residents," Mrs Carroll said.

"The campaign was very successful. We talked to parliamentarians and succeeded in retaining many trees."

She also singles out the society's fight against a consortium's plan to develop an "oceanarium" at Ricketts Point in the mid-1960s as a fond memory.

Mrs Carroll said the society, which "opposed the spoiling of the coastline", organised a public meeting that attracted a large crowd.

Another long-standing member, Geoffrey Goode, said that meeting sent a clear message to MPs. "The State Government refused consent and the plan was shelved," Mr Goode said.

The area now forms part of a marine sanctuary.

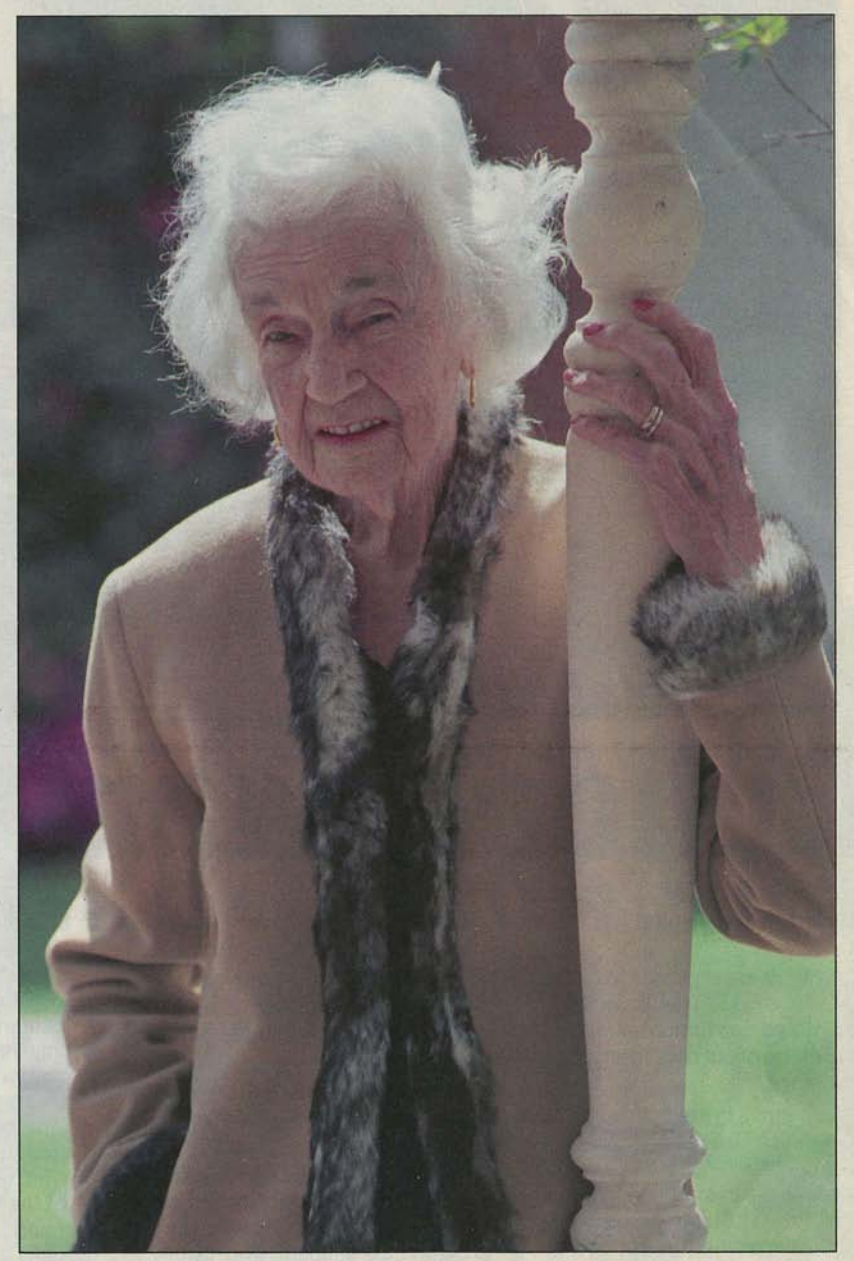
Mrs Carroll, the only living member of the society's original committee, has since been made a life member.

"The campaigns have been worthwhile," she said.

"The area (Beaumaris) is still lovely with many trees.

"Others are carrying on (our work) and we are growing."

The Beaumaris Conservation Society has 400 members.



Cath Carroll, 96, has fought the good fight. *Picture: VALERIU CAMPAN.* N14SB603