

Walking Taronga to Balmoral



Route	Port	Jackson	Distance	Approx. walking time
Taronga to Balmoral Walk			6km	2 hr
– Taronga 1 to Clifton Gardens 5			4km	1 hr 30 mins
– Clifton Gardens 5 to Bungaree's Farm Boundary 9			1km	20 mins
– Bungaree's Farm Boundary 9 to Balmoral 11			1km	20 mins
Circuit Walk			5km	1 hr 40 mins
Middle Head Walk			4km	1 hr 30 mins

Produced by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust as a joint project with Mosman Council, Sydney Harbour National Park and the Walking Volunteers, February 2006.

For more information go to www.harbourtrust.gov.au or phone 8969 2100

- All walking routes mentioned in this brochure are open during daylight hours. Please take note of individual opening and closing times on gates in the area.

- Dogs are NOT permitted in Sydney Harbour National Park and some Council reserves. On Harbour Trust lands, dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.
- Walkers are asked to clean their shoes before and after walking on bushland tracks in the area to avoid the spread of the root fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.



1 Taronga Zoo opened in 1916 and now has more than 2,000 animals from around the world. As well as being one of Sydney's most popular tourist attractions, Taronga Zoo has an important role in research, conservation and education. The zoo is open everyday from 9am – 5pm.

2 Athol Hall was built in 1908 from the ruins of a hotel that once stood here. Previously the area had been one of the many pleasure gardens that were established around the harbour in the 1860s. *The Athol Hall* café is open Tues-Fri & Sun 11am – 3pm.

3 Convict labourers built a gun battery on **Bradleys Head** after four American warships managed to sail undetected into Sydney Harbour in 1839. The fortifications were added to and modified over the years. Remaining are a firing wall, gun pits, timber gun carriage and slide. The mast of the first HMAS *Sydney*, which sunk the German ship, SMS *Emden* during World War I, stands on the tip of the headland.

4 Taylors Bay contains remnant Sydney bushland that provides a home to Ring-tailed Possums, Blue-tongued Lizards, Southern Boobook Owls, Tawny Frogmouths, Kookaburras and Rainbow Lorikeets. There is also a rich array of marine plants and animals in the waters of Taylors Bay and Chowder Bay. These provided a rich food supply for Aboriginal people occupying headlands and bays around the harbour.

5 Clifton Gardens was one of the harbour's many pleasure grounds. In 1872 the Clifton Gardens Marine Hotel opened, and it was followed by a dancing pavilion, wharf, bathing enclosure and skating rink. The popularity of the hotel and grounds declined during the Depression, and in 1969 the hotel was demolished.

6 From the 1890s, **Chowder Bay** was a base for the Submarine Mining Corps, which laid a string of defensive mines from here to the other side of the harbour. Many of the original buildings remain and the site is now used by the Sydney Harbour Institute of Marine Sciences and for wooden boat restoration, a scuba diving centre and a café. The *Bacino Kiosk* is open Tues-Sun 7am-4pm.

7 Atop **Georges Head** is a spectacular lookout over the harbour. It's easy to see why military experts placed guns here in the 1870s as part of an outer line of harbour defences. The nearby sandstone barracks that housed the gun crews is now a function centre and restaurant, The Tearoom at Gunners' Barracks.

8 Georges Heights and **Lower Georges Heights** served as Army bases for well over 100 years. Initially part of the harbour defences, they later became barracks, a World War I hospital, a training centre and a transport depot. The Harbour Trust offices are in former hospital wards and the buildings at Lower Georges Heights are used by an array of artists.

9 Up a little way from where the walking track crosses Middle Head Road is a clearing with a magnificent view out through the harbour's heads. Here you will find a line of paving stones that marks what is believed to be the boundary of **Bungaree's Farm**. Governor Macquarie set up a farm for Aborigines in the area in 1815 and put King Bungaree in charge.

10 Bushland behind HMAS Penguin Naval Base contains one of the best stands of Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata*) trees around the harbour. The other main tree species you will find in bushland between Taronga and Balmoral is the Bangalay (*Eucalyptus botryoides*). There are also many Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*), Black She-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) and the endangered Sunshine Wattle (*Acacia terminalis subsp. terminalis*).

11 Balmoral has long been a popular location for leisure and recreation. An artists' camp was established here in the 1880s, the Bathers Pavilion was built in the 1920s and a regular ferry service, and later a tram line, brought day trippers here from Circular Quay.

12 Lawry Plunkett Reserve contains remnants of the Balmoral tramway system that operated from 1922 to 1958, including an impressive sandstone cutting. There is also a large midden at the bottom of the reserve near the Esplanade. The reserve received a significant makeover in 2004 and much has been done to improve stormwater flow.

13 Bradley Bushland is named after the Bradley sisters, Eileen and Joan, who lived in Mosman and were passionate about the Australian native bush. They developed the Bradley Method of bush regeneration that is still widely used throughout Australia.

14 The rock cairn in **Rawson Park** was a gift from Scotland to the people of Australia as part of the 1988 Bicentenary. It celebrates the landing of Captain Arthur Phillip in Australia in 1788. Nearby is a large Celtic cross standing over the grave of aviator, Keith Anderson, who lost his life while searching in the Australian desert for Charles Kingsford-Smith.

15 The **Mosman Drill Hall** at the end of Cross Street was built in 1913 as one of a number around NSW that provided military training to citizen forces. During World War I a searchlight battery was stationed here and the hall was later used as the Headquarters 8th (Infantry) Brigade.

16 Many of the impressive **Federation houses** in this area were built by speculative builders, Smith and Cabban, from the 1880s onwards. After purchasing a large portion of the Silex Estate, they built about 170 houses around Bradley's Head Road and Prince Albert Street.

17 Along Chowder Bay Road are several old fortifications, including the 1880s bitumen covered armoured **Upper Casemate Battery**. Soon after completion, three guns were moved here. One was brought straight down the hill, through the bush from Georges Heights.

18 Obelisk Beach is a clothing optional beach. Its name comes from the two white stone obelisks nearby. These were built in the 1850s to guide ships safely into the harbour.

19 The weatherboard buildings at the start of **Middle Head** were built for the Australian School of Pacific Administration. Here, training courses were run for Government officials, diplomats and Pacific nationals. The red brick buildings housed the Army Military Intelligence Unit, which dealt with aerial photo interpretation, foreign Army tactics and combat intelligence. The Army transport group, 10 Terminal Regiment was later based here.

20 From 1801 to the 1960s, the **Middle Head Battery** was an integral part of Sydney's defence. An extensive network of tunnels and gun emplacements remain, overlooking the harbour. In the tunnels are 'tiger cages' where Australian troops about to go to the Vietnam War were taught how to withstand torture and interrogation.

21 Much of Middle Head was cleared in the 1920s to build a golf course. This building was the **Golf Clubhouse** until World War II when it was resumed by the Army for married quarters.