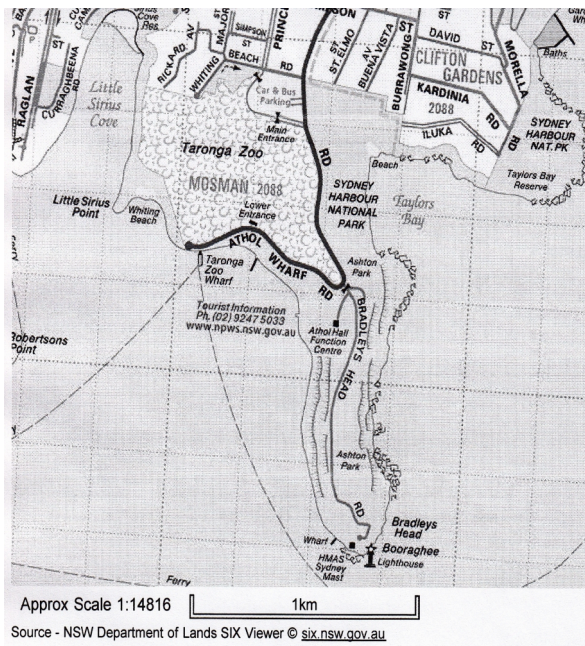




HISTORIC GUIDE TO THE BRADLEYS HEAD AREA



The brochure is designed for those who follow in any direction the sign posted walking tracks with glorious harbour views that link Bradleys Head with Little Sirius Cove and Taylors Bay.

Paid parking areas are at Little Sirius Cove, near the Athol Hall Function Centre and at the end of Bradleys Head Road. Buses connect various locations with Taronga Zoo and Taronga Zoo Wharf. There are regular ferry services between the wharf and Circular Quay.

Mosman Library's Local Studies Collection holds materials on the history of the Bradleys Head area.

The Aborigines belonged to the Borogegal clan of the Eora nation. In 1789, a smallpox epidemic killed many of the Aborigines living around Sydney Harbour.

Athol Bay, originally called Sandy Bay, is a safe deepwater anchorage. In 1831, Robert Millard and Richard Linley were permitted to use four acres of land, named Point Pleasant, at Whiting Beach, Sandy Bay, to build a shipyard and eight years later, they were issued a deed of grant. No ships, however, were built there. The Ferrier family constructed a five-room stone house called 'Athol', with a wharf, two wells, an orchard and gardens, in 1837. The family retained the property until 1904 but after 1853, it was let to tenants. In 1840, Mrs Mary Hanson was granted four acres east of Point Pleasant and in the following year, Linley transferred his interest to Millard. The Crown resumed Point Pleasant for defence purposes in 1871. In 1912, a 42-acre site on Athol Bay was rededicated for use as a zoological park. A ferry wharf served by a tramline opened near the new zoo in 1917. On 3 November 1927, *Greycliffe* sank in Sydney Harbour after a collision with *Tahiti*, resulting in 42 deaths. The wreckage was later hauled up on to Whiting Beach. During the

Second World War, the giant troopships *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* anchored at Athol Bay. For many years after the war, old Australian warships were located in the bay before being scrapped.

Athol Hall was built on the site of an earlier dance hall in 1908. The nearby Athol Arms (later Athol Gardens) Hotel, very close to the present parking area, was first recorded in 1863, later being extended. The lawns surrounding the hall comprised a well known 'pleasure garden'. J.T. Coffill took over the Athol Gardens Hotel and Pleasure Gardens in 1880. Two years later, though, it lost its dancing permission and licence. It became the Athol Temperance Hotel. Sydney Ferries acquired Athol Gardens in 1906.

Bradleys Head was known to Aboriginal people as Borogegy, Booraghee, Booragy or Burrogy. Its present name is after Lieutenant William Bradley of HMS *Sirius*, the First Fleet flagship. In 1788, he referred to 'Bradley Point'. The Crown acquired much of the area for military purposes. Military construction work commenced in 1839-1841 with a stone jetty and a circular sandstone gun pit, both of which still stand at the end of Bradleys Head. Bradleys Head Road, an extension of Military Road, was originally a level path for horse drawn vehicles to service the fortifications. Gun emplacements and a sandstone firing gallery located near the end of Bradleys Head Road were built in 1871. In the same year, the stone column from the first Sydney General Post Office façade, which was demolished in 1863, was erected near the jetty to mark a nautical mile from Fort Denison. It provided accurate sea trial

measurements, allowing the speed of newly constructed ships to be checked. The jetty supplied soldiers stationed at the fortifications. In 1895, T.S. Huntley acquired mineral leases between Bradleys Head and Athol Gardens. A coal-mining site, near Athol Hall, was cleared and levelled but due to public protests, no mining was allowed. An electric beacon with a foghorn was erected at the southern end of the Head in 1905. In 1908, Ashton Park was proclaimed. It included 142 acres at Bradleys Head and was named after James Ashton, New South Wales Minister for Lands. The tripod foremast and fire control tower of HMAS *Sydney*, the Australian warship that sank the German raider *Emden* in 1914 and which was broken up in 1928, was erected in 1934 to coincide with His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester's visit to Sydney. The dedication and playing of the national anthem were timed to occur as he sailed past on his way to a surf carnival in Manly. A degaussing station stood on the beach on the eastern side of Bradleys Head during the Second World War. It was used to neutralise the magnetisation of ships. A bitumen road was built through Ashton Park in 1964. During the 1960s and 1970s the sisters Joan and Eileen Bradley (no relation to William Bradley), who lived very close to the park and spent much time in it, developed the widely acclaimed Bradley bushland regeneration system. Ashton Park became part of Sydney Harbour National Park in 1975. The producers of the 2000 film *Mission Impossible 2* built the amphitheatre at Bradleys Head after they used its site to erect a polystyrene house from which the actor Tom Cruise after landing at the jetty could rescue a girl being held hostage.

Curlew Camp, the site of which is reached on the clearly signposted track on Little Sirius Cove's eastern shore, existed from 1890 to 1912. Its founder was the clothing manufacturer Reuben Brasch. Famous Australian painters Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton first came there in 1890, making frequent return visits. They and other well-known Australian artists lived in tents along the foreshore and painted the beautiful harbour scenery. They belonged to the 'Heidelberg School', which was greatly influenced by French impressionism and favoured painting in the open air to capture the Australian landscape's light and colour. The camp had a dining hall, a billiards tent and well-maintained gardens. A pathway was built to access it. Some of the tents were filled with heavy and ornate furniture. Roberts and Streeton left the camp for the last time in 1896. It closed when the decision was made to create Taronga Zoo.

Flora and fauna are much the same as they were before Sydney's establishment. The area is the home of many native animals and birds, including some endangered species.

Little Sirius Cove, which is well viewed from Curlew Camp, was named after HMS *Sirius*, a 20-gun frigate that was flagship of the First Fleet, which arrived in Sydney Harbour in 1788. Great Sirius Cove was an early name for the southern portion of nearby Mosman Bay.

Taronga Zoo opened as a 'zoological garden' in 1916 and now has more than 2,000 animals from around the world. It replaced the previous

government zoo established at Moore Park in 1880. Many of the animals came by vehicular ferry from Moore Park. Jessie, a four ton elephant, who had been out of Moore Park only once in 34 years, walked to Circular Quay in 45 minutes and crossed on a boat quietly. In 1916, a tram service started from Mosman Junction to the zoo and in 1917, it was extended to Taronga Zoo Wharf. Taronga's lower entrance and aquarium opened in 1927.

Taylor's Bay was named after the fisherman Joseph Taylor who lived there earlier than 1838, when its patch of sand was called Taylor's Beach. The steamer *Centennial* was wrecked in the bay in 1889 after colliding with another vessel. In 1942, Royal Australian Navy patrol boats cornered and sunk by depth charges in the bay one of the three Japanese midget submarines involved in the daring attack on Sydney Harbour. The largest house overlooking Taylor's Bay is The Manor, or 'Bakewell's Folly', on the corner of Iluka and Morella Roads, which can be seen clearly from the eastern side of Bradleys Head. Built by William Bakewell for his family, it was completed by about 1914 and had 45 rooms. From 1922 until the present, it has been the home of a Theosophist community, which seeks to find God and achieve universal goodwill by spiritual ecstasy, direct intuition or special individual relations. In 1926, the Theosophical Broadcasting Station Pty Ltd, called 2GB, was established at The Manor and operated there for a short time before moving to the city.

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