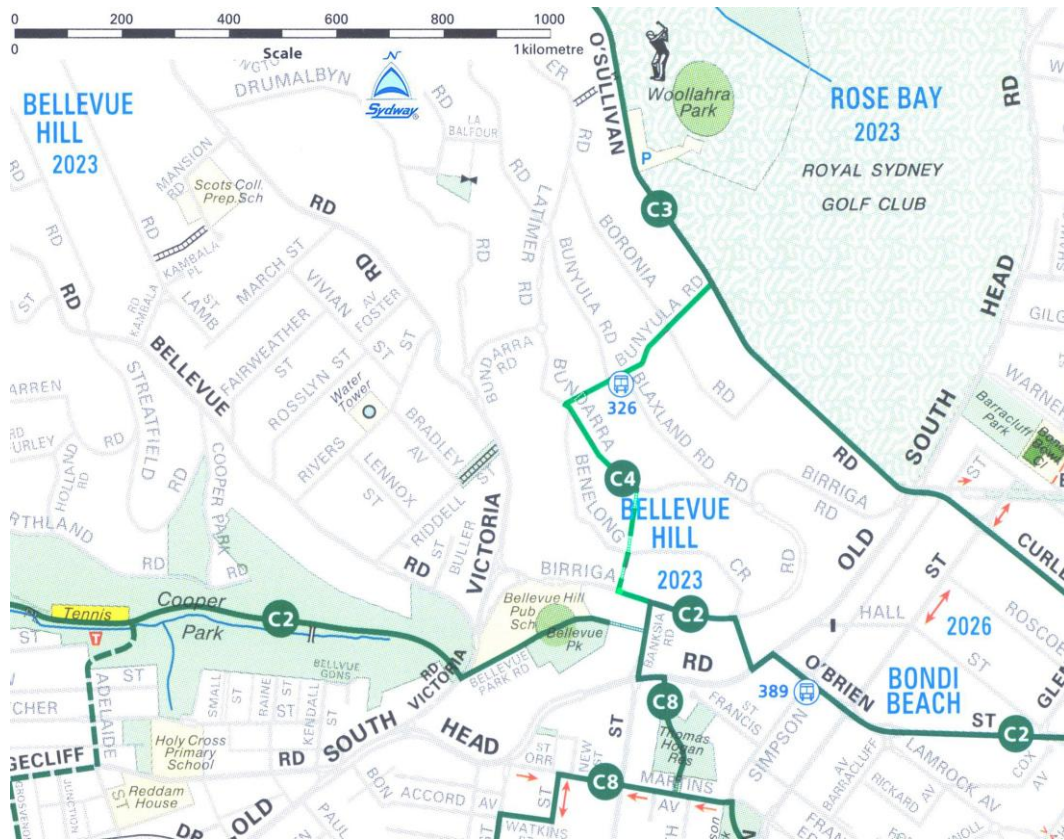


CIRCULAR QUAY TO SOUTH HEAD AND CLOVELLY

CONNECTING WALK C4: BELLEVUE

BELLEVUE HILL TO O'SULLIVAN STREET



- Main Walk:** — **Loop and Connecting Walks:** —
- Distance:** 0.8km.
- Time:** 15 mins (downhill only).
- Level:** Easy-Moderate (downhill only); some steps.
- Transport:** Birriga Rd buses.
- Connects with:** Connection Walks C2 (Cooper), C3 (Bondi).
- Facilities:** Nil.

This route connects the longer C2 and C3 Connection Walks which head for Bondi and will be most useful as a way of linking several routes to create a longer circular walk. However, it is also a quiet walk through enjoyable houses and down stepped lanes with some fine views. It can of course, be walked in either direction, but for obvious reasons, the downhill version is recommended. It has one other curious distinction in that every street it passes through (and most others nearby) starts with the letter 'B' until O'Sullivan Road is reached.

Begins at C2 Cooper Connection at the corner of Banksia and Birriga Roads. Turn left and on the northern side of the road, immediately past Number 24 Birriga Rd, turn down the stepped lane, crossing Benelong Crescent and down more steps to Bundarra Road. Turn left here, but just before the junction with Benelong Crescent (just past Number 25 Bundarra) turn right down another lane with more steps. At the bottom follow Bunyula Road to the junction with O'Sullivan Road and the C3 Connection Walk.

The Connection route is entirely within Bellevue Hill, although the suburb's flasher houses, where the Fairfax and Knox dynasties and such originally set up, are generally closer to the Harbour. Part of the giant Cooper Estate (see Graham Spindler 2011 - **Connecting Walk C4 - Bellevue: 1**

Loop 6), much of the area was subdivided into smaller (but still substantial) estates during the late nineteenth century with grand Victorian and Edwardian mansions generally facing the Harbour. These included the Tooth family's *Cranbrook* (1850s), John Fairfax's *Ginahgulla* (1858) and *Leura* and *Rona* (Knox family, 1880-90s). These particular houses, and a number of others remain, although some as part of exclusive private schools (Cranbrook and Scots), but the area was subdivided again into urban-sized blocks and streets around the 1920s. Thus, older houses in this area often retain Spanish Mission or art deco features from the latter period although there has been a lot of renovation and rebuilding.

Life at Bellevue Hill has not been for everyone the pinnacle of success. Some considerable way down Birriga Road from where the Connection Walk crosses it, was a bungalow at Number 98, where, in June 1965, English comedian Tony Hancock, committed suicide. Hancock had been one of England's top comedians, achieving immense success in the early days of television with *Hancock's Half Hour*. The classic sad clown, Hancock's comedy image was always of a morose, ineffectual dreamer from whom success was usually snatched away. It turned out to be a mirror to his life and by 1965 success, and the comedic muse, together with his second marriage, had deserted him. He came to Australia to try for a comeback, but the gigs and attempted television specials were complete failures. As he said in his suicide note, too many things went wrong too often. In the Birriga Road house which had been lent to him by a friend, Hancock's last half hour was shared with a cocktail of pills and alcohol. Around 2006-07 the house with its sad memories was demolished and apartments were built in its place.

Most of the inhabitants of the fairly sober and frequently understated houses along this Connection route, have obviously dealt with their down times more successfully. It is a pleasant area with fine views down the steps from Birriga Road and Benelong Crescent (albeit amidst electrical and telecommunications cables).