

CIRCULAR QUAY TO SOUTH HEAD AND CLOVELLY

MAIN WALK SECTION 1: CIRCULAR QUAY TO RUSHCUTTERS BAY



- Main Walk:** ——— **Loop and Connecting Walks:** ——— **Alternative Routes:** - - -
- Distance:** 6km.
- Time:** 2 hours 20 mins.
- Level:** Easy-moderate; some steps.
- Transport:** Circular Quay, Kings Cross and Edgecliff Stations; Circular Quay Ferry; Circular Quay, New South Head Rd buses.
- Connects with:** Federation Track; Loops L1 (Macquarie St), L2 (Kings Cross), L4 (Darling Point); Connection Walks C1 (Woolloomooloo).
- Facilities:**
Toilets: Circular Quay, Botanic Gardens, Beare Park, Reg Bartley Oval, Rushcutters Bay Park;
Picnic spots: Botanic Gardens, McElhone Reserve, Beare and Rushcutters Bay Parks;
Shops or hotels: Circular Quay, Domain, Woolloomooloo, Potts Point, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay Park.

The Main Walk begins at **Circular Quay**, the birthplace of European Sydney. To stand near the Circular Quay ferry wharves is to stand on what, on January 26, 1788, was water. At some point about 200 metres inland on that day, a group of naval officers and marines led by the first Governor of NSW, Captain Arthur Phillip, might have been raising a flag and a tankard of rum near the banks of a small, clear stream of water that was their reason for selecting this spot for a settlement. About the same distance offshore an anchored line of transport ships, each about the size of one of the Manly Ferries which now slip in and out of the wharves, would have been sending ashore longboats of male convicts and equipment, along with the wafting sounds and smells of months of confinement. And all around, on the foreshores and rocky ridges, would have stood the silent, encircling bush, amidst which equally silent, dark figures would have watched the curious new arrivals with quiet, uncertain eyes.

It's all a little hard to picture now. The stream still flows, but in pipes beneath roads and buildings planted on what had been tidal mudflats. Circular Quay defines the new shoreline and remains a gateway to Sydney city. It was partly built by the last of the convicts to be sent to Sydney from Britain, and was originally (and more logically) known as 'Semi-circular Quay'. The double deck Cahill Expressway and City Loop railway and station act as both visual barrier and passageway to the city beyond – almost all of what can be seen having been built since the opening of the expressway in 1958 - one of the few exceptions being Sydney City Library which occupies the fourth of the Customs Houses (1885) that once controlled the imports of the colony.

Loop Walk L1 begins at the eastern end of Circular Quay at the glass fronted lift to the Cahill Roadway. The Main Walk stays at the water level and turns left (north).

From the eastern end of the ferry wharves turn north, following the arcades and walkways to Sydney Opera House. After almost circling the Opera House, enter the Royal Botanic Gardens via the Opera House Gate.

Note the plaques in the paving along this the walkway which commemorate Australian and visiting writers.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the eastern side of Circular Quay was lined by stone warehouses and provided berths for increasingly large overseas passenger steamships. Stone stairs (only Moore Steps from 1865 still survive) linked the lower roadway to Macquarie Street and the Tarpeian Way precinct of the Botanic Gardens. Most of the warehouses persisted until after WWII, replaced in the 1950s and 60s with uninspired glass and concrete office blocks. When these were torn down in the 1990s and the view to the Botanic Gardens and Government House opened up again, there was a sustained public outcry about plans to hide it again behind a new series of buildings which - dubbed 'The Toaster' – seemed hardly more inspired to the public in architectural terms than their predecessors. However, even though the views did mostly go and the architecture above the fine colonnade at street level is mundane, the result of the Opera Quays development has been a massive reinvigoration of the area and a lively connection to the Opera House.

Sydney Opera House stands on Bennelong Point, originally a virtual island and first called 'Cattle Point' by Captain Arthur Phillip and used as a cattle pen for Phillip's farm. It gained its new name from an Aboriginal called Bennelong who played a remarkable role in early Sydney and who lived for a time here in a small hut. Woollarawarre Bennelong, and another man, Colby, had been kidnapped at Governor Phillip's orders in late 1789, in an attempt to learn more about the Aborigines and promote communication with them. Bennelong learnt English quickly, adopted European dress, became a trusted friend of Phillip and contributed greatly to early knowledge of the Eora people and the reasonably peaceful relations of the early years of settlement. He travelled to England when Phillip returned there in 1795 and was something of a hit in English society, even meeting King George III (who was still relatively sane at that point!). His return to Sydney in 1795 was less successful, alcohol and recurring trouble with both whites and blacks contributing to his eventual death at Ryde in 1813.

In 1817, Governor Macquarie had convict architect Francis Greenway design a castellated fortress on the point, completed by 1819, which together with Fort Dawes on the western point of Sydney Cove (now the southern pylon of the Harbour Bridge), provided close-in defence for the town's most important entry point. The fortress was demolished in 1903 for a castellated tramshed designed by Government Architect W. L. Vernon. A couple of little cafe buildings en route to the Opera House are all that now remain of the tram depot and port facilities. The trams were taken off Sydney's roads by the end of the 1950s and the tramshed demolished in 1960 to make way for the Opera House, designed by Danish architect, Joern Utzon, and opened in 1973 after a stormy decade of design changes, political interventions and cost overruns. The building stage was almost as much a source of fascination and controversy for Sydneysiders as the Harbour Bridge had been but it had its sublime moments such as when its first concert was performed from scaffolding for construction workers by American bass and activist, Paul Robeson – himself the son of a former slave. The segmented shell skyline became an unquestioned

icon of Sydney, stunning in its setting, and a popular multi-purpose cultural centre which had an immediate and huge impact on Sydney life. The Public Works Department-designed interior, which was at the centre of the split between the Government and the architect, has little relationship with the wonderful exterior and proves disappointing for some. Thirty years into its life, the split between government and architect was healed and work began on some remodeling.

The waterfront walk around the building is Sydney at its most delightful and leads again to rear of the Opera House's monumental Mayan Platform and open space of the rear. Facing it is a quarried rock face of what was once a massive outcrop running down to the point and known as the Tarpeian Rock. The quarried stone went into Fort Macquarie, the roadway, the Quay and finally even the Opera House. Some classical scholar managed to see a connection between it and a cliff face on the ancient Roman Republic's Capitoline Hill from which murderers and traitors – and people with disabilities considered cursed by the gods – were flung to their death. There is no record of Sydney's Tarpeian Rock being used for that purpose, but perhaps it was considered by both sides as an option at the height of the Opera House design wars.

Follow the Farm Cove seawall around to Mrs Macquaries Point before turning south to follow Woolloomooloo Bay towards the wharves and restaurants at its head.

There are two sets of gates into the Botanic Gardens. Closest to the water are the Queen Elizabeth II Gates which were the original entrance to the Gardens before 1897. They were renamed in 1954 during the first Royal visit to Australia having previously been known as 'Man-o'-War Gates' because Farm Cove had been a commonly used sheltered anchorage for warships, and their crews came ashore nearby. Before the Europeans arrived, Farm Cove was called Woccanmagully by the Aboriginal people and the area was an important ceremonial site. After Europeans arrived in 1788, it became the site of the colony's first, but not very successful, farm, subject of an important display area further inland in the Gardens.

The smaller gate to the right is the Opera House Gate. Pass through it and a few steps in by the rocky outcrop to the right, take a look at the sculpture, *The Satyr*. When the original was completed by Guy Lynch in 1924 it was soon purchased by the Art Gallery but proved so controversial that it rarely appeared in public (and never without causing an outcry) over the next 50 years. While it was mainly the statue's private parts which caused reaction, it was also its expression: the sculptor's response to his experience in the trenches during WWI. Finally, in 1977, a bronze cast of the statue was erected here. The model for the work had been Lynch's brother, Joe, and a few years later, in 1927, Joe Lynch – his pockets full of beer bottles - had drowned when falling from a ferry near this spot on his way to a party. Joe's death was also the inspiration for Kenneth Slessor's poem, *Five Bells* which then became the subject John Olsen's painting commissioned for the opening of the Opera House.

Return to the walkway next to the Farm Cove seawall and follow it in an easterly direction. The early Governors of NSW claimed all of this area as part of their private domain but settlers nevertheless cleared most of its forest. In 1810 Governor Macquarie built a wall, a section of which still stands, to enclose some of the area, as well as a private road out to Mrs Macquaries Chair, the completion of which is also regarded as the official opening of the Botanic Gardens. Under its first superintendent, Charles Fraser, the gardens and a botanic collection were built up, opening to the public in 1831. Charles Moore's arrival as Director in 1848 (he stayed until 1891) opened the way to the Garden's development in its present form. The seawall was built from 1848 to the 1870s, extending the Garden area. Moore also established Sydney's first zoo on the site before it moved to Moore Park in 1883 and then Taronga in 1916. Joseph Maiden followed Moore as Director, increasing the scientific achievements of the gardens and completing the Herbarium building in 1899. Despite droughts, incursions by vandals and public events, and land grabs for private development, roads and public and private building on the original Governor's Domain, the Botanic Gardens ('Royal' since 1959) have maintained their integrity and tranquil beauty and remain one of Sydney's best assets.

There is a great deal to see in the Gardens but strictly following the seawall leads eventually around to the Yurong Gate (1901, a replacement for an 1837 gate) leads out of the Gardens to an area which has been the inaugural point of a number of significant ceremonial occasions. Known as Fleet Steps (don't bother looking for the actual steps), it was here that the new Governor General, Lord Hopetoun, was ceremoniously received in December 1900 a couple of weeks before he inaugurated the new Commonwealth of Australia on 1 January 1901. The same site was where Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip stepped ashore from the Royal Yacht *Britannia* to a colourful and rapturous welcome signalling the start of the first visit to Australia by a reigning monarch in 1954.

As **Mrs Macquaries Point** (called 'Yurong' by the Aborigines) is neared, the views back to the Opera House and Bridge understandably attract visitors by the busload. Before 1800, a carpenter, John Anson, had established a small orchard and vegetable garden on Yurong Point. Later it became Governor Macquarie's wife's favourite spot and the Governor had a road established and the interesting chair cut into a sandstone rock shelter in 1816. Mrs M. was not the only user of the point's rock shelters. As well as the Aborigines, they have also been shelter to many homeless people.

Once the point is turned, there are a couple of levels of walkways back towards Woolloomooloo. All offer great views across Woolloomooloo Bay to Garden Island. Originally an island and regarded as part of the Domain, a small garden for supplying ships was established there in 1788. Over time it became a British naval base and a number of office, accommodation, ship repair and maintenance buildings were constructed on it, many of which survive. In 1911 it was handed over to the newly formed Royal Australian Navy, becoming their primary Sydney base. The base was the target of an attack by Japanese submarines in 1942 (see Loop Walk L2). In 1938 the British Governments requested the construction of an enormous dry dock in Sydney and this site was selected because of the fear that bombing of the Harbour Bridge might close off the upper harbour. Work on the Captain Cook Graving Dock, which would link Garden Island across the 600 metres of water to Potts Point, began in July 1940, after the start of WWII. Large coffer dams were constructed and between 2,500 and 4,000 workers worked round the clock to reclaim 33 acres of harbour. The Dock when completed was 346m long, 47m wide and 16m deep, able to accommodate the largest British warships. It opened in March 1945, six months before the Japanese surrender ended WWII. The mighty cantilever hammerhead crane which dominates the skyline, one of only six such ever built, was designed specifically to lift the enormous turret covers off the 18 inch guns of British battleships. No longer in use it stands as another monument to this remarkable wartime enterprise. The Garden Island facilities are now operated by Australian Defence Industries (ADI), while the wharves down into Woolloomooloo Bay are the Navy's Sydney Fleet Base. Recently a museum, the Naval Heritage Centre, was opened on the base but can only be reached by ferry from Circular Quay.

Alongside the Bay is the recently reconstructed 'Andrew (Boy) Charleton pool, operated by Sydney City Council, the last of the pools which at various times lined the sides of this peninsula. From the 1830s, when swimming in Sydney Cove was banned, the point attracted numerous bathers and bathing establishments. At one of its predecessors on this particular site, the Domain Baths, Andrew 'Boy' Charleton (1907-75) set three world records in 1924 (200, 400 and 800 metres) twice defeating world champion, Arne Borg of Sweden. The crowd's cheering could be heard up in Martin Place. The same year, Charleton won the 1500m gold medal at the Paris Olympics. Immediately beyond the Charleton pool, steps lead down to an interesting waterside chrome and rust sculptural installation, *Dual Nature* (1999) by Nigel Helyer, emitting sounds related to the human, nautical and industrial history of the Bay. A little further along at the end of a waterfront path extending from Lincoln Crescent, is the very evocative *Archaeology of Bathing* by Robyn Backen, recalling the former Domain Ladies Baths as well as involving tidal movements and the naval presence in the Bay. There are several sculptural works on the high ground between the inward and outward lanes of Mrs Macquaries Road, one being a monumental bronze group of poet and short story writer, Henry Lawson (1867-1922), together with a swagman, cattle dog and fencepost. It was erected in 1931, by which time its sculptor, George Lambert, was dead. A famous painter, but an inexperienced sculptor, his sudden death was caused by 'the great physical labours of handling the clay' for the statue (see Loop L10). A second irony about the statue is that Lawson would probably have been very cynical about being memorialized in his death by the same great and famous personages who crossed the street to avoid him in his lifetime. In a sarcastic poem he wrote about the unveiling of the Robbie Burns statue in 1905 closer to St Marys Cathedral, and in which he clearly linked himself with Burns, he spurned "the crawlers round the poet's name", commenting how "The men we scorn when we're alive, with praise insult our ashes."

Towards the head of the bay there are several options and levels for reaching Cowpers Wharf Road, one of the most interesting being to take the footbridge just beyond the Lawson sculptures and approximately opposite the Botanic Gardens buildings. This crosses over Lincoln Crescent to the roof garden of the Wharf Terraces apartments. The roof garden is a rare opportunity to share a little of life in these multi-million dollar apartments built on a former wharf, as well as offering further enjoyable options for getting down to wharf level.

Loop Walk L1 rejoins the Main Walk at the junction of Lincoln Crescent and Cowper Wharf Road.

Follow Cowper Wharf Road around to the start of the Fleet Base but before the Navy Carpark begins, cross to the McElhone Stairs and climb them to Victoria Street. Turn left onto Embarkation Park atop the Navy Car Park.

Of the several hotels still in the Woolloomooloo area, the first met is **Bells Hotel**, which was owned for many years by Jimmy Carruthers (1929-90), the first Australian to win the World Bantamweight Boxing Championship

in 1952, defeating South African Vic Toweel. Carruthers, a frenetic boxer, was estimated to have thrown 147 punches at Towell in the first 139 seconds of Round 1 before knocking him out. He retired undefeated in 1954, although attempting an unwise comeback in 1961.

Apart from the Navy Base, the most prominent feature of Woolloomooloo Bay is the Finger Wharf. But this was not built until the early twentieth century. Reclamation of Woolloomooloo Bay and wharf construction commenced in the 1850s and later Cowper Wharf created the new head of the Bay when built over the mudflats and was later extended as a semi-circular wooden wharf. The Garden Island naval base expanded and other waterfront industry – boatbuilders, timber yards, sawmills - grew up nearby as did pubs and brothels and workers' housing. By the 1880s the 'Loo was a working class suburb, with some of the city's poorest workers and a rough street reputation. The Corporation Markets and Fishmarkets were established down at the Bay about 1890 and by the turn of century there was also a growing fishing community, mostly of Maltese and Italian origin. After Sydney was hit by bubonic plague in 1901 – the source of which was the rat-infested waterfronts - wharves and potential wharves from Woolloomooloo around to Balmain came under the control of the new Sydney Harbour Trust (later the Maritime Services Board) which began a massive rebuilding program. From 1910-14 the old semi-circular wharf was demolished and the **Finger Wharf**, able to take deep sea vessels and liners, was built by engineer Henry Walsh (Walsh Bay is named for him). The wharves played a significant role in Sydney history, not only for imports and exports, but as embarkation points for troops leaving for the Boer War and World Wars I and II and as arrival points for post-WWII migrants.

For more on Woolloomooloo see **Connection Walk C1**.

In the 1970s the Maritime Services Board indicated its intention to scrap the Finger Wharf for new wharf development and in 1987-88 successive governments proposed to replace it with a marina. Resident anger and heritage concerns resulted in a major protest seeking retention of this rare Federation style wharf – possibly the largest wooden wharf left in the world. By the early 1990s a compromise was reached, the marina plan dropped and the current refurbished wharf with its hotel, apartments and restaurants was the outcome.

Beyond the fancy restaurants and hotel of the Finger Wharf is a real Sydney institution, *Harry's Café de Wheels*. During the 1930s Depression, Harry 'Tiger' Edwards, set up a caravan selling pies near the gates to the navy base. It was one of many such to be found in Sydney around those times and it has retained a particular affection amongst sailors. Harry served in the army in WWII and re-established his caravan café with its new name on his return. Apparently, the name arose, not just from the fact that the premises was an actual caravan but also from a city ordinance which required that food stands be moved at least one foot each day. Originally it only opened at night and stayed open late, which made it immensely popular in a post-war Sydney where pubs closed at 6:00pm, cafes and coffee bars were almost non-existent and getting any sort of a feed after 10:00pm was virtually impossible. Harry himself died in 1979 but along the way, his café acquired star-attracting status with its patrons including Frank Sinatra, Marlene Dietrich, Elton John, Pamela Anderson and many more. The café moved to its present site from near the McElhone Steps when the navy carpark was built and the current wheel-less version is very upmarket compared to the original caravans, one of which is in the Powerhouse Museum.

Immediately beyond Harry's, are the gates into the Navy Fleet Base where RAN or visiting warships are usually berthed. The Fleet Base and its large carpark is a 1970s and 80s development on the original wharves which eliminated the last of the fishing fleet in Woolloomooloo.

Potts Point and Kings Cross sit on a massively quarried ridge some distance above the Bay and were connected by some substantial stairways in the nineteenth century. Cross the roadway to the substantial **McElhone Stairs**, taking many opportunities to pause and admire the view while climbing them. The stairs are named for John McElhone (1833-98), a pugnacious merchant and politician who built a house in the early 1880s near the head of the stairs. An impetuous and hot tempered but honest man, McElhone was constantly in controversy in Parliament, the courts and the newspapers, forever seeking to expose corruption and hold governments to account.

To the left at the top of the stairs, the very explorable **Embarkation Park** is a creative use of the navy carpark roof, offering pleasant spaces and excellent view of the city and Bay.

Loop Walk L2 leaves the Main Walk at this point, continuing left along Victoria Street.

Cross to Challis Avenue and follow it through to Macleay Street. Almost opposite the mouth of Challis Avenue on the opposite side of Macleay Street, take the narrow lane indicated for Elizabeth Bay House. After its zigzag progress turn right at the bottom of its step in Billyard Avenue and walk up to Elizabeth Bay House at the start of Onslow Avenue.

The southern corner of Challis Avenue and Victoria Street is taken up by St Vincents College. The Sisters of Charity have been on this site since 1856 when they purchased the mansion *Tarmons*. St Vincents Hospital began here in 1857 but outgrew the site and moved to Darlinghurst in 1870). *Tarmons* former owners had included Sir Charles Nicholson (medical man, politician and Sydney University benefactor) who sold it to the Sisters. The poet Christopher Brennan, a part-time teacher of languages at St Vincents in the 1930s, lived nearby.

Challis Avenue offers only a taste of the Kings Cross / Potts Point area – for more information **see Loop Walk L2**. John Henry Challis arrived in Australia in 1829, becoming a prosperous merchant and benefactor of Sydney University. This area was subdivided after his death in 1876 and the street includes fine Romanesque and Greek Revival Terraces. These terraces are a little more upmarket but terraces and the former mansions of the area, as well as twentieth century styles. Mostly divided into flats by the 1930s, buildings like these provided the relatively cheap housing that attracted enormous numbers of writers and artists to the area. From the 1920s until at least the Vietnam War era, this was Sydney's Bohemia. Those who lived for a time in this particular street included actors Peter Finch and Chips Rafferty.

Just before Macleay Street, was Vadim's Restaurant, which became a famous haunt for Sydney intellectuals of the post war decades, poet Les Murray and writer Frank Moorehouse featuring it in some of their works. At the Macleay Street corner, where **Loop Walk L2** crosses the **Main Walk**, numbers 63-59 Macleay was the home from 1928 to the 1960s of writer Frank Clune and family. By the 1950s, son Terry, had established an art gallery here. Throughout that period, this was a centre for Bohemia, attracting artists and intellectuals for parties and events, as exhibitors and, at time, residents. John Olsen, Russell Drysdale and John Passmore all lived there at various times, while frequent visitors included Robert Hughes, Robert Klippel, George Molnar, and many more. After the Clunes had gone, artist Martin Sharp converted the gallery into the Yellow House, a sort of fantasy tribute art centre to Vincent Van Gough, surrealism and avante-garde. Recently renovated, it is yellow once more.

The lane connecting Macleay Street and Billyard Avenue emerges opposite a turreted Victorian house, *Ramona* at Number 18. Poet Kenneth Slessor lived in a flat in the building for 18 years from 1940s-60s. Next door, *Del Rio*, was the first of the Spanish Mission-style flats so popular in Elizabeth Bay.

However, the real attraction is to the right: one of Sydney's most elegant survivors, *Elizabeth Bay House*, on a pocket of land barely big enough to stop it spilling into the roadway under the weight of the high rise bearing down on it. Once the house stood on a 22 hectare grant made to Alexander Macleay (1767-1848), extending from present day Macleay Street to the shores of Elizabeth Bay. The Colonial Regency-style house was partly designed by architect John Verge and built 1835-39 and its elegant interior features a central staircase curving up toward an arcaded gallery under a great oval-shaped dome. Macleay was Colonial Secretary (and first Speaker of the Legislative Council) and apart from his government duties – which were partly rewarded by this grant in 1826 – he was an noted amateur natural historian. He established an enormous botanical garden at Elizabeth Bay and his entomological collection had international repute. The family scientific tradition continued, culminating in the establishment of the Macleay Museum at Sydney University. After his death, the land and gardens shrank progressively with various subdivisions under various owners, including James Macarthur-Onslow after whom the street (the former carriageway to the house) is named. The last subdivision in 1927 left the house on this space but fortunately some blocks did not sell and were purchased by Sydney City Council in 1949 to create the reserve opposite. In the 1930s the house was an artists squat before a temporary resurgence as a reception venue. By 1941 the house had been converted into 15 flats, some again occupied by artists and writers, and from one of them artist Donald Friend had a front row view of the pyrotechnics lighting up the night sky during the Japanese submarine attack on Sydney Harbour in 1942. It remained flats until the 1970s when the deteriorated house was purchased by the government and restored, eventually becoming the first property to be managed by the new Historic Houses Trust in 1981. It is open to view daily.

Across the street, the reserve bought by Sydney City Council became in 1955, the lovely Arthur McElhone Reserve gives the house some decent and suitable breathing space. The reserve's name commemorates a local alderman who represented the ward for 44 years and was briefly, in 1935, Lord Mayor of Sydney. It stands on what was once the highly prized lawn of *Elizabeth Bay House*, and features magnificent views, a charming carp-laden watercourse, and flowerbeds.

Loop Walk L2 reconnects with the Main Walk at this point.

Walk through McElhone Reserve and down the steps to Bilyard Avenue, following it down to Ithaca Road and Beare Park.

From McElhone Reserve, steps drop down to Bilyard Avenue to some of Sydney's most expensive real estate. As Ithaca Road is neared, Spanish Mission walls emerge on the left and there used to be opportunities to look through the wrought iron grilles into a movie set of fountains, paved Moroccan-like courtyards and loggia, overtopped, remarkably, by a mango tree. Recent owners have asserted their privacy by blocking up the original open windows and gates. The sense of Hollywood here is no accident, the style was introduced into Australia via the movies and resulting interest in the houses of the movie stars and moguls – this one even had its own 30 seat basement cinema. The metal name plates which show and tell its not especially Spanish name, **Boomerang**, are part of the trademark of music publishers, J. Albert and Sons, and the house was designed in 1926 by Neville Hampson for the proprietor, Frank Albert (1874-1962). It has a remarkable art deco interior, featuring artificial marble tiles and walls with mahogany paneling, and 5 bedroom suites. Reputed in 1928 to have been the most expensive house ever built in Australia, it has attracted high profile, mega-rich owners such as media moguls. Its tenth owner, from a well-known trucking family, paid \$21 million for it in 2005. *Boomerang's* outer buildings (servants quarters) turn the corner into Ithaca Road – note the Tradesmens' Entrance at No. 9 – and there are more views of it from the waterfront park. This part of the property had included a 6 car garage with its own petrol pump, service bay, pit and crane.

Beare Park is a pleasant place to pause and enjoy the view of Elizabeth Bay, Garden Island and the ever-moving harbour. Part of it was once the garden and terraced lawns of theatrical entrepreneur, J. C. (John Cassius) Williamson's home, "Tudor", almost legendary for its lavish entertainment in their time.

Take Ithaca Road up to Elizabeth Bay Road and cross over in an easterly direction to Holdsworth Avenue which leads down to steps into the Reg Bartley Oval area and along a path to Rushcutters Bay Reserve.

Back up Ithaca Road, near the corner with Elizabeth Bay Road, note the *Ithaca Gardens* apartments which were designed (and lived in for a time) by architect Harry Seidler in 1957. Its most interesting external feature is its garages.

From the Holdsworth Avenue steps, the path crosses the parkland past Reg Bartley Oval and across a canal into the wider expanses of **Rushcutters Bay Park**. The canal is one of the first stormwater canals built in Sydney and is part of a 9km network draining a large area. Up towards New South Head Road the covered areas have served sometimes as rather hazardous shelter for the homeless. Even the eccentric Sydney personality, Bea Miles stayed there at times. Miles (1902-73) came from a middle class Ashfield family and attended Sydney University but increasingly upset authority with her conduct - perhaps as a result of conflict with her father, who committed her to Gladesville Hospital for the Insane until media publicity forced her release. From the age of 38 Miles had no fixed address, although some income – part of which was earned quoting Shakespeare to anyone who would pay. A well-known large figure in sunshade, tennis shoes and greatcoat, she was notorious for her refusal to pay transport or taxi fares and her resulting literal battles with cabs and drivers. An avid reader, she frequented the State Library until eventually banned. In 1955 she paid a female cabbie £600 (\$1,200) to drive her to Perth and back over 19 days. She claimed to have been falsely convicted by police and the courts 195 times and fairly 100 times. Bea died in a nursing home in Randwick.

Rushcutters Bay was originally a large swamp at the confluence of two creeks. It had been called Blackburn Cove to honour the Master of HM Armed Tender *Supply* in the First Fleet but the name subsequently shifted a bay eastwards. The area saw much activity by convicts cutting reeds as a source of roof thatching in the early days of the colony, from which the name the 'Rushcutting Bay' arose. A bridge (since rebuilt or widened several times but still known as Bentley's Bridge) was built across the creeks when the **New South Head Road** was built in the 1830s, the road following roughly a traditional Aboriginal foot track to South Head used by early settlers and called 'The Maroo'. The swamps were reclaimed from the late 1880s to the 1890s when the stormwater canal was built and the present park was formed. By that time cable-drawn trams were winding their way out here from the city or up nearby Ocean Street, later to be replaced by electric trams that went all the way to Watsons Bay.

The Bay has the reputation of being the place where relations between white settlers and Aboriginal owners started to go wrong, when two convicts were killed by Aborigines in 1788, apparently after molesting Aboriginal women. However, the incident probably occurred closer to the settlement.

The water is dominated by the massed masts of the Cruising Yacht Club – and many of these are not ordinary yachts, as they float on dollars, not water. The Sydney to Hobart Race kicks off from here every Boxing Day and

the Bay was the sailing base for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. To the right, towards New Beach Road, are convenient toilets attached to an even more convenient café.

Across New South Head Road (and now behind the rail viaduct) are the famous White City tennis courts on the site of a former amusement park and near to that was the site of the once equally famous Sydney Stadium, the boxing and (later) entertainment venue (for both see Federation Track).

The Federation Track departs the Main Walk at this point, heading right (south) up New Beach Road to New South Head Road, while the Main Walk turns left heading northwards along the same road.