

Discover Headland Park

Explore this heritage precinct at your own pace and discover the panoramic views, peaceful bushland and layered history.

Middle Head, Georges Heights and Chowder Bay



Headland Park, one of Sydney's most striking urban parklands

Welcome to Headland Park

We acknowledge the Borogegal people, the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands.

Headland Park incorporates Middle Head, Georges Heights and Chowder Bay.

It is rich in natural and cultural history and has some of Sydney's greatest harbour vantage points. You'll experience bush tracks, boutique cafés, restaurants, art studios and breathtaking views of the entrance to Sydney Harbour — all just minutes away from Mosman Village.

Headland Park Highlights

Artist precinct

Visit the Headland Park Artist Precinct — a collective of more than 15 studios with sculptors, painters, potters and photographers (See headlandartists.com).

The Sculpture by the Sea Collection of winning pieces is located in the adjacent parkland. (Map ref 4F)

Georges Head lookout

Take in a panoramic view of Sydney Harbour with uninterrupted views across to Sydney Heads, Vaucluse and to the Sydney CBD. (Map ref 4H)

Military batteries and fortifications

Discover the underground tunnels, gun pits and military fortifications used in the defence of Sydney on regular guided tours.

Middle Head fortifications*

- Lower Georges Heights Battery (Map ref 4F)
- Georges Head Battery (Map ref 4H)
- Upper Georges Heights Battery (Map ref 4F)

*Please be advised that access is only available during tours.

Kids

Kids can stretch their legs and take in views of the harbour as they run through parklands and explore the walking tracks at Georges Heights. They can also peek inside the gated entrances to the old military gun emplacements, explore a WWI-era hospital display, and interact with open-air sculptures. (Map ref 4F)

Picnics and BBQs

Pack a picnic and soak up the views of Sydney Harbour from one of the many BBQ and picnic areas. Free electric BBQs are available to use. (Map ref 4F, 6D)

Beaches

Take a dip at Cobblers Beach (Map ref 6B), Obelisk Beach (Map ref 5D) and at Clifton Gardens' beautiful netted beach. (Map ref 1I, 2I)

Water sports

Discover the beautiful marine life of Chowder Bay by BYO snorkelling or diving. If you prefer to keep your head above water, you can kayak around the picturesque harbour foreshore. (Map ref 2I)

Walks and self-guided tours

Follow the walking paths to discover dozens of attractions, harbour views, scenic bushland, and history. Stop off at Chowder Bay, before continuing on the foreshore between Taronga Zoo and Balmoral. Join one of our guided Tunnel Tours to discover the former military fortifications around the park.

Stop, indulge, unwind

Even a short stroll can stir an appetite, so make sure you stop for refreshment when you're visiting Headland Park:

Georges Heights

Frenchy's Café (Map ref 4F)
3 Read Place

Tea Room at Gunners Barracks (Map ref 4H) End of Suakin Drive

Chowder Bay

Drift Café (Map ref 3H)
Building 2, Chowder Bay Rd

East Coast Lounge (Map ref 3I)
Top floor, Building 7B
Chowder Bay Rd

Ripples Chowder Bay (Map ref 2I)
Building 7, Deck C, Chowder Bay Rd

Middle Head

Burnt Orange (Map ref 5D)
1109 Middle Head Rd

Middle Head Café (Map ref 6C)
1110 Middle Head Rd

Headland Park Tunnels and Gunners Tour

This tour takes you through two sets of fortifications dating back to the 1870s. Hear about the role this commanding harbour location played in the defence of Sydney.

In addition to historic underground fortifications with gun emplacements protecting

the harbour, you will also walk through beautiful bushland with magnificent harbour views, which now hosts artists, cafés, restaurants and businesses, with plenty of open space to explore.

Visit our website for dates and to book.



Georges Head Battery (Map ref 6)



King Bungaree, chief of the Broken Bay tribe, NSW, died 1832 / drawn from life 1831 and on stone by Chas. Rodius

First Nations Country

Headland Park is located within the traditional lands of the Borogegal people and was a place that served social and ceremonial purposes. The headlands provided an important vantage point for the region whilst the foreshore provided shelter, food and water, as well as access to the harbour for navigation by boat to other areas.

Georges Heights was the site of an experimental farm established in 1815 by Governor Macquarie. 18 First Nations men and their families were provided a piece of fertile land and access to the harbour for fishing. This land is known as Bungaree's Farm, named after one of the experiment's participants — Bungaree who accompanied Matthew Flinders on his circumnavigation of the continent in 1802. The exact boundaries of the farm are uncertain.



These First Nations settlers were not Borogegal, but were from the Broken Bay area and Macquarie appointed Bungaree, to be their chief. Bungaree has been described as witty, intelligent and something of a diplomat and is recognised as an example of significant collaboration between First Nations and Europeans.

Bungaree's Walkway (Map ref 3H) is the track that stretches up from Chowder Bay to Georges Heights and may once have been the road used to get up to Bungaree's Farm from the harbour. For over 100 years, the military used the same path to travel between their Chowder Bay depot and their barracks at Georges Heights.

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the establishment of Bungaree's Farm by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1815, the Harbour Trust proudly dedicated Bungaree's Walkway in his memory.



Walking trail, Headland Park (Map ref 4D)

Native bushland

The native bushland in this area has been conserved due to years of relative isolation. Tracks now criss-cross the area, allowing visitors to enjoy the bush and scenic views. Teams of bush regenerators work regularly in this area to reduce weed infestation and support native plant growth which in turn conserves habitat for native animals. Common plant communities include eucalyptus forest as well as scrub containing banksia, kunzea, acacia and hakea species. Some areas also support endangered plant species such as Acacia terminalis.

Chowder Bay native animals

The largely undisturbed shoreline of Chowder Bay and the bushland in Headland Park provide habitat for a wide range of native species. Keep a look out for Water Dragons, Fur Seals, Blue-Tongue Lizards, Ring-Tailed Possums, Fairy Wren, Powerful Owl, Common Bent-wing Bat, Green Tree Snakes, Kookaburras, Rainbow Lorikeets, Currawongs, Pacific White Face Herons, and Dollar Birds.



Banksia Occidentalis



A visiting Fur Seal in Chowder Bay

The ASOPA story

(Australian School of Pacific Administration)

In WWII, Middle Head was home to an internment camp for Italian nationals. Later, the group of 15 weatherboard barracks buildings, was used as accommodation and training for the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA).

From its early years ASOPA played an important role in the development of Papua New Guinea. From 1948, ASOPA offered a number of courses to train Australians as administrators for Papua New Guinea.

The Institute operated until 1987, when it was proclaimed as the AIDAB Centre for Pacific Development (or AusAid). Until its closure in 1998 the Centre still received strong demand for its education and teaching.

The history of ASOPA, and its successor institutions, paralleled the changing political milieu of the post-war and cold war years. ASOPA began as a training institution for Australians taking leadership positions in Australia's territories. In its middle life, the school offered courses to people from developing countries, and provided a base for Australians consulting to the developing world.



ASOPA walkway in Middle Head (Map ref 6C)

Defence life on the headlands

Headland Park has been occupied by defence forces in one form or another for more than 200 years.

As early as 1801 during the Napoleonic Wars, Georges Heights was recognised as an important site for the defence of Sydney.

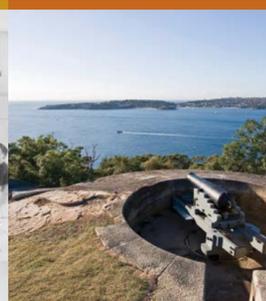
The decision in 1870 by the British Government to withdraw its troops from the Australian colonies and to pass defence responsibilities to the individual colonies resulted in the NSW government adopting an "outer line" of defence strategy for Sydney Harbour. This consisted of a series of batteries on the outer reaches of the harbour including Georges Head, Middle Head, Bradley's Head and inner South Head.

The first of the later gun batteries was constructed at Georges Heights in 1871, with the complex linked by underground tunnels, ancillary rooms and magazines.

Once the construction of batteries was in progress the planners' attention was turned to the construction of permanent barracks.



WWI soldiers recovering at the former Auxiliary Hospital (Building 21/Map ref 8)



Gun emplacement at Georges Head Lookout (Map ref 5)

In the 1890s, a base was built at Chowder Bay for the Submarine Mining Corps. Mines were attached to underwater cables that stretched across the harbour to be detonated if an enemy ship passed through.

From 1914, the surrounding defence areas on the ridge were used largely for hospital purposes to serve the many casualties of WWI and by 1918, it was the home of the third largest military hospital in Australia. By 1922 the neighbouring hospital had been disbanded and the site put to other military uses such as a training centre for army personnel. At this time the Georges Heights precinct mainly comprised bushland with some clearings formed to provide connections with other parts of the Military Reserve.

After WWII, defence lands were used opportunistically to accommodate various uses. For example a number of houses were constructed to accommodate defence personnel. Today you can take a guided tour of the remnants of underground tunnels, and experience how soldiers defended Sydney.

And don't miss the **Hospital on the Hill** exhibition in Building 21. (Map ref 3G).

Read stories of the staff and recovering soldiers of Australia's third largest military hospital, built here in 1916 to treat WWI casualties returning from the trenches of the Western Front.



Soldier (name unknown) on Middle Head

Advocacy and local community
After the departure of Defence from Georges Heights, Middle Head and Chowder Bay, the Headland Preservation Group was formed in 1996 to campaign against private residential development of this land. This campaign was successful and led to the formation of the Harbour Trust in 2001.

The Harbour Trust protects and manages a network of heritage sites on Sydney Harbour.

In addition to Headland Park, our portfolio also includes Cockatoo Island / Wareamah (Sydney Harbour), North Head Sanctuary (Manly), Sub Base Platypus (North Sydney) and Macquarie Lightstation (Vaucluse).

Enjoy these distinctive urban foreshore parklands — they're free for everyone to visit all year round.

Did you know?

Since our establishment the Harbour Trust has remediated, rehabilitated and enabled the adaptive reuse of sites and buildings that were previously locked away. We have created extraordinary precincts and parklands that provide a lasting legacy to the people of Australia.

The Harbour Trust continually looks to further establish Headland Park as a destination providing significant connections in the circuit of coastal walks and sharing the extraordinary stories of the sites role in the defence of Sydney and maintaining a spectacular harbour-side parkland that offers opportunities for culture, recreation, education, and enterprise.

Be involved

Interested in volunteering, signing up for our e-newsletter or finding out more about the Harbour Trust? Visit us at: harbourtrust.gov.au

Stay connected

Send us an email: info@harbourtrust.gov.au

Or follow us on social media:



[@harbourtrust](https://www.facebook.com/harbourtrust)
[#headlandpark](https://www.instagram.com/headlandpark)
[#georgesheights](https://www.instagram.com/georgesheights)
[#middlehead](https://www.instagram.com/middlehead)
[#chowderbay](https://www.instagram.com/chowderbay)

Emergency

In case of emergency, phone Triple Zero (000) or 112 if mobile coverage is limited and state your location. Then contact:

- Ranger**
0432 750 714 | 7am – 4pm
- Security**
0433 631 572 | 4pm – 7am



15km walk to Manly and Manly Ferry Wharf



4 km walk to Taronga Ferry Wharf via Bradley's Head and Taronga Zoo

Welcome to Headland Park

Legend

- Public toilets
1A, 1C, 1H, 2C, 2D, 2G, 3F, 3H, 5C
- Accessible toilet
2H, 3F, 3H, 5C
- Emergency Assembly Point
2G, 3F, 3I, 4H, 5C
- Defibrillator (AED)
2G
- Food and dining
2I, 3H, 3I, 4F, 4H, 5D, 6C
- Gun emplacements
4F, 4H, 5H, 6D, 7A, 8C
- Lookout
1G, 3I, 4E, 4G
- Parking
1I, 2G, 3F, 3H, 4D, 4F, 4H, 5C, 5H, 6C
- Picnic area
4F, 6D
- Playground
1C, 2I
- Scenic walk
2A, 2J
- Swimming area
2C, 2I, 5D, 6B
- Visitor information sign
1G, 2I, 3I, 3G, 5C
- Water fountain
1B, 1I, 2C, 2G, 3I, 4F, 4H
- Buses
1A, 1I, 2F, 3F, 3I, 5C
- Ferries
- Harbour Trust sites
- Main walking routes
- Shared bicycle/pedestrian path
- Harbour Trust boundary

Site Features

- 1 Mosman Drill Hall (1913)
1H
- 2 WWII Camouflaged fuel tanks (1939-1945)
2H
- 3 Chowder Bay Submarine Miners Corps (1890s)
3I
- 4 Gunners Barracks (1873)
4H
- 5 Georges Head Lookout
4H
- 6 Georges Head (A84) battery (1871)
4H
- 7 Beehive Casemate (1871) and Armoured Casemate Battery (1885)
5H
- 8 WWI Hospital exhibition (1916-1921) (The Hospital on the Hill) 3G
- 9 Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (1958)
3G
- 10 Parade ground
4G
- 11 Upper Georges Heights (A83) battery (1871)
4F
- 12 Artist precinct
4F
- 13 Lower Georges Heights (B42) battery (1877)
4F
- 14 Bungaree's Farm boundary interpretation
4E
- 15 ASOPA (1947)/AusAID (ASOPA) (1997)
6C
- 16 10 Terminal
6C
- 17 Fortifications (1801)
6D
- 18 Middle Head Fortifications (1871-1911)
7A, 8C

100m
Map is approximately to scale

