BRONTE ROAD

A Waverley Library
Local History Fact Sheet

Images from top:

Bronte Beach, 1890s.

Bondi Junction, looking down Cowper Street from Oxford Street with the Tea Gardens Hotel in the background, 1910. The stretch of road is forms the start of Bronte Road.

The road to Bronte Beach has had many names throughout its history, often depending on which of Waverley's suburbs it passed through, who was using it, and which part you were on.

Today it begins at the corner of Oxford Street Bondi Junction, travels through Charing Cross, and ends at the water's edge at Bronte Beach.

In 1788 the section of Bronte Road at Charing Cross was known as Frenchmans Road, named because it was used by the crews from *La Pérouse's* ships. When the first settlers and market gardeners arrived it was re-named Coogee Bay Road, as it was the road to Coogee.

After Waverley Council's incorporation in 1859 the part of Bronte Road at Charing Cross again changed name, becoming Leichhardt Street after German explorer Ludwig Leichhardt. Later again the stretch from Oxford Street to Victoria Street was named Cowper Street, after Sir Charles Cowper, member of the NSW Legislative Assembly for East Sydney, 1859-1867, and Premier of NSW when the Waverley municipality was created.

In 1940 an effort to streamline the road's name saw Cowper Street, the Charing Cross section of Leichhardt Street, and a portion of Nelson Bay Road all re-named to Bronte Road.

The final stretch of Bronte Road, where it arrived at the beach from Charing Cross, has been known as Bronte Bay Road and Nelson Bay Road.

BRONTE ROAD

Today it is all simply Bronte Road – the road to Bronte Beach.

Images from top:

Bronte Road, Bronte. This section was originally named Nelson Bay Road until the 1940s. Bronte Gully and Park in the background, 1937.

Bronte Beach looking north, August 1995.