Berkeley’s PATHS

A Newsletter of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, Winter 2001  Vol. 4 No. 1

Important Figures in the History of the Pathways

In searching for documents showing the origin of Berkeley’s paths, the best sources are often original development maps of Berkeley, Paul Grunland explained to January’s general meeting. In the early 20th Century, Berkeley’s hills were controlled by the Realty Syndicate, the brain child of Frank Havens and Frances Marion (Borax) Smith. The area was ripe for a boom: The trans-Bay transportation network was complete; rail lines and streetcars were being extended into the hills; and the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 spurred a diaspora to the East Bay.

Berkeley was then a small town with a large number of utopian visionary thinkers such as Charles Keeler, principal spokesper- son of the Hillside Club; environmentalist John Muir, painter William Keith; and architect Bernard Maybeck. San Francisco had provided a bad example of applying the rigid grid design of streets to hilly terrain. By this period, there seemed to be consensus that hillside streets should be aligned with the natural contours of the land. Thus the continued on back

Berkeley’s Early Byways by Richard Schwartz

Don’t miss Richard Schwartz’s presentation March 15 at Live Oak Recreation Center, when he’ll elaborate on his book, tying in stories relevant to Berkeley’s paths.

continued on back

Dedicated to the creation, preservation and restoration of public paths, steps and walkways in Berkeley for the use and enjoyment of all.

BPWA 1442A WALNUT ST, #269
BERKELEY, CA 94703

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Special thanks to RUTH ARMSTRONG, founder of BPWA, for her service on the board.

Meetings

Meetings

Live Oak Park Rec. Center
7-9 pm 1200 Shattuck Avenue
Feb. 22 Board Meeting
Mar. 15 General Meeting
Berkeley’s Early Byways by Richard Schwartz
Apr. 19 Board

Path Walks  RAIN OR SHINE

Saturdays at 10:00 am (allow 2-3 hours)
Feb. 24 Ridge to Bay Trail, Part I
Meet at Tilden Nature Center. Bring $1.35 (exact change) for return trip on bus.
Mar. 17 N.E. Pathways
Paul Grunland  526-9001
Meet at Euclid and Grizzly Peak
April 21 Creeks and Flatland Paths, Yesterday and Tomorrow
Susan Schwartz  548-9555
Meet at Boggie Woogie Bagel Boy Garden, Gilman between Curtis and Santa Fe
May 19 Unimproved Paths
Charlie Bowen  540-7223
Meet at Glendale-La Loma Park
Pottuck at Glendale-La Loma Park follows walk
Jun. 9 Revelatory Landscapes
(A tour of SFMOMA-sponsored art work)
Mark Liolios  549-0818
Meet at AMTRAK station under University Ave.
July 7 Kensington Pathways
Paul Grunland  526-9001
Meet at Reservoir Grizzly Peak and Spruce
August 25th U.C. Campus Pathways
Allen Stross  841-2359
Meet at Center and Oxford
Important Figures continued

new areas of Claremont, Northbrae, Cragmont, North Cragmont, and Thousand Oaks were developed with this in mind.

Few people then owned horses or automobiles. The very long blocks created by contoured streets naturally led to plans for pathways that would provide pedestrian shortcuts to trains or streetcars. The original development maps show Berkeley’s paths as part of the original infrastructure, with names. Prime among the companies that carried out this subdivision was the Berkeley Traction Company, which became the Berkeley Development Company and finally Oakland Traction Company. The companies borrowed money from the Realty Syndicate, bought the land, laid out the streets, and sold the lots.

Duncan McDuffie, a key partner in Berkeley Traction, probably deserves much of the credit for establishing Berkeley’s path network. McDuffie, who graduated from UC Berkeley in 1899, not only developed many of Berkeley’s most beautiful neighborhoods, but also was a leader in the

Sierra Club and the Save-the-Redwoods League and played a large role in the creation of California’s state park system.

To build the contoured streets and pathways, however, required a skilled engineer. Here the key figure seems to have been Charles L. Huggins, who graduated from UC Berkeley in 1884 and later became Berkeley’s town engineer. Huggins had helped the Hillside Club correct street problems in the Daley Scenic Park neighborhood, north of the UC Berkeley campus. Paul recently interviewed the 102-year-old daughter of Charles Huggins, who used to stroll in the hills with him, and feels his contribution to developing the pattern of hill transportation was immeasurable.

Others, such as John Spring in Thousand Oaks, later followed the pattern McDuffie and Huggins had set out.

As we enjoy the pathways today, we should remember the forethought of a century ago and be grateful for our legacy.

Story by Paul Grunland.

Berkeley’s Early Byways continued

Schwartz’s book Berkeley 1900, Daily Life at the Turn of the Century, offers a wild ride through Berkeley with a unique presentation of faithfully reproduced newspaper articles and vintage photographs. Schwartz reveals a town of large gypsy camps, larger-than-life criminals and policemen, resourceful immigrants, and bustling mom-and-pop shops. He has uncovered fascinating human-interest stories and anecdotes about Berkeley’s children, wild animals in downtown streets, environmental issues, race relations, and more, from articles first published a century ago.

The book’s thirty chapters provide the reader with a textual introduction followed by over 650 newspaper articles exactly as they appeared in the Berkeley Gazette, interwoven with quotes from turn-of-the-century Berkeleyans. Included are over 170 photos of long-ago daily life.

Schwartz, who came to Berkeley in 1973, is the author of The Circle of Stones, a nonfiction archeological mystery. He also has written articles for the Alameda County, Berkeley, and Truckee Historical Societies.

In 1996, Schwartz was at the Berkeley Historical Society as a stack of Berkeley newspapers circa 1900 was about to be discarded due to possible mold. He couldn’t imagine such an intriguing resource getting thrown away, so he rescued the papers and took them home. The book was the result.

Problems with paths call

Encroachments: Diana Aikenhead, 883 6535
Maintenance: Jay Kelekian, 644 6943
Dept. of Parks & Waterfront

www.internettime.com/path

If you have any concerns about path issues please call Jacque at 524-4715.

Annual membership in Berkeley Path Wanderers Association is $5.00 due January 1st of each year. Benefits include Path Inventory Index, maps of pathways, quarterly newsletter, and BPWA mailings.

Mail form with check or money order, payable to

BPWA, Berkeley Partners for Parks
1442A Walnut St., #269, Berkeley, CA 94709

BPWA is a member of Berkeley Partners for Parks, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

BPWA Membership Form Please print

Name__________________________________________
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City__________________________________________
Zip__________________________________________

Email__________________________________________
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Berkeley Boy Scouts Troop 19 at work on Twin Path.

New Mini-Grant Will Continue Path Improvements

BPWA has received a new $5,500 Berkeley Parks mini-grant to continue improving paths in the coming year. Working with Berkeley Boy Scouts, we hope to continue re-grading, improving drainage, and adding wooden steps.

Our first mini-grant made five muddy, slippery tracks easy to stroll. In the latest projects, Boy Scout Troop 19 Eagle Scout candidates Sven Chilton, Ian Saulberg, and Matt Seufferer improved Latham and Twin Paths, both close to Grizzly Peak.

This year’s candidates for improvement include Acacia, Sterling, and Stevenson Paths. The new grant also includes funds for benches. If you know of a good spot, please let us know.

In partnership with Friends of Five Creeks, BPWA is also working on a grant proposal to link the Bay Area Ridge Trail in Tilden Park with the Bay Trail in the new Eastshore State Park, via Berkeley paths and Codornices Creek. In addition to building one or two of the unbuilt hill paths, and helping create a half-mile pedestrian path along lower Codornices Creek, the project would demarcate one or more routes, perhaps with interpretive signs telling about human and natural history.

Yearly $5.00 membership dues were due in January for the 2001 year. If you haven’t yet, please send checks to:

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association,
1442 A Walnut Street, #269,
Berkeley, CA 94709.
Berkeley’s PATHS

Berkeley’s Byways—on Path Names

This story is from boardmember, Paul Grunland’s files—a newspaper clipping, unfortunately with date and name missing—by the looks of it, from The Berkeley Daily Gazette. The date of authorship is sometime after the 50s for certain as that was when the Marin Circle Fountain lost its fountain. Any clues to the authorship? Please let us know.

Rose Walk, off Euclid Ave., was commissioned by Mrs. Florence Dickens Gray and the late B. G. Gray and designed in 1913 by the master architect, Bernard Maybeck. The winding path and its lovely terraces are classic in their simplicity.

Orchard Lane, with its multi-tiered steps winding through a hillside woods, was built in 1908. The lane connects two levels of Panoramic Way.

The stories behind the naming of many of the byways could easily become legendary.

In 1930, Mrs. Nettie S. Gaines, who lived off an unnamed set of steps near Hawthorne Terrace, complained that the post office wouldn’t deliver her mail. The reason given was that she resided on an unofficial street. The city council came to the rescue with an ordinance legalizing Hawthorne Terrace Steps, and Mrs. Gaines got her mail.

Four years later, Mrs. Belle M. Holmes, who described her family as the continued on back

Path W alks

RAIN OR SHINE

Saturdays at 10:00 am (allow 2-3 hours)

August 25th  U.C. Campus Pathways
Allen Stress  941-2359
Meet at Center and Oxford

September 22nd Park Hills
Mardi Sicilar Mertens  849-1142
and Marilyn Siegel  549-2908
Meet at the fountain at Park Hills & Shasta

October 27th Panoramic Hill and Upper Strawberry Creek
Ann Moghaddas  548-3566
Meet at the international House at the top of Bancroft.

November 10th Ridge to Bay Trail Part II
Janet Byron  948-4008
and Charlie Bowen  548-7225
Take the #65, 10:00 sharp at Berkeley Bart, or the 10:05 on Euclid at the Rose Gardens. Reconvene at Shasta & Grizzly Peak at 10:30.

December 1st Eastshore State Park
Susan Schwartz  848-9258
Meet at Sea Breeze Market University & Frontage Road

Meetings

Live Oak Park Rec. Center
1200 Shattuck Avenue

Sept. 19 General Meeting
Special Wednesday meeting at the Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St.
Paths of the East Bay Hills: Natural History. Panelists include
Malcolm Margolin, Richard Schwartz, and Steve Edwards

Oct. 18 Board Meeting

Nov. 15 General Meeting
Finding Yourself in the Hills: the Berkeley Paths
by Karen Kemp

Dedicated to the creation, preservation and restoration of public paths, steps and walkways in Berkeley for the use and enjoyment of all.

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Berkeley Byways continued

pioneer residents of Kentucky Ave., asked that the path adjacent to her home be christened. “It’s an official bus stop, but passengers don’t know how to tell the driver where to let them off,” Mrs. Holmes lamented. “If you can’t think of a better name we would be honored to have it designated Holmes Path.” And so it was.

Fountain Walk, named in 1916 and connecting Del Norte Ave., to The Circle, gained its appellation from the fountain which graced the center of The Circle. At the base of the fountain were three bears, holding hands, of all things. The bears and the fountain are long gone, done in several years ago by a wayward truck.

Across Del Norte Ave., is Terrace Walk, the upper level of which is still referred to unofficially as The Daisy Path. It was named 50 years ago by children in the area because of its profusion of daisies, or so the story goes.

Billy Jean Walk, connecting Euclid and Hillside Aves., was named for his daughter at the request of City Councilman “Call Me Joe” Harris back in 1931.

Although there is a colorful history to the naming of most paths, at least 29 lack any such distinction. Back in 1941, City Engineer Harry Goodridge complained that many byways had no names and were a nuisance to describe on official documents. So, in one fell swoop he bestowed names on 29, including Poppy, Bret Harte and Parnassus paths, Twain

Professional Path Map in the Works

With a kind donation of $1,500, from councilmember Betty Olds toward the production of a 2-color, professionally printed map, BPWA is working with Hedberg Maps, Inc. of Minneapolis, Maine. An affordable and very readable map, the map should be available for purchase by the end of the year, with a discounted price for BPWA members.

If you have any concerns about path issues please call Jacque at 524-4715.

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Berkeley’s earliest planned neighborhood by
Mason McDuffie—Claremont—included paths, concrete paved sidewalks, and street names on Arts and Craft design stone pillars.

Unlike later neighborhood developments, the paths received names from the start: The Short Cut appears on this 1909 map, Park Path, linking El Camino Real with Oak Ridge Road, is the only unnamed path, and from Oak Ridge Road to Tunnel Road, the path was never improved.

Way and El Mirador Steps.

Many of the byways take their names from streets, from early residents and from trees and flowers. But in many respects the best cognomen of all has been reserved for a path off Grizzly Peak Blvd., and a sister walkway up from Alvarado Rd. They are called simply The Shortcut! [The other path titled The Shortcut is located near the Marin Circle, up hill from Terrace Walk, and between Walnut and Oxford streets.]

Berkeley Public Works

Thanks go to Ken Emiezum, Civil Engineer for the Department of Public Works engineering division, for his commitment to the improvements of the paths. Paths to be improved in the near future are Tamalpais, The Crossways and North Crossways, Martinez, Easter Way and Alta Vista. Handrails will be installed at Billy Jean Walk, and Terrace Walk (by the stairs).

Mark Your Calendar

BPWA will have a booth again at the Solano Stroll—this year it’s September 9th. And on September 30th it’s How Berkeley Can You Be? The parade is always silly fun. Get involved with BPWA’s group this year—call Helen Wynne at 843-5738.

Berkeley Path Wanderers needs help with title research. If you can help, or if you know someone who can, please call Jacque at 524-4715.

BPWA Membership Form

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www.internettime.com/path
Berkeley’s PATHS

A Newsletter of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, Fall 2001 Vol. 4 No. 3

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association is a grassroots volunteer group of community members who have come together to increase public awareness of the City of Berkeley’s pathways. BPWA hopes to accomplish this goal through volunteer-led path walks, identification and accurate mapping of Berkeley’s complete path network, and eventual restoration of paths that have been blocked or obscured.

Meetings

7-9 pm 1200 Shattuck Avenue
Nov. 15 General Meeting Finding Yourself in the Hills: the Berkeley Paths by Karen Kemp plus Board Members Elections
Jan. 17 Board Meeting
Feb. 21 General Meeting Program to be announced

Path Walks RAIN OR SHINE
Saturdays at 10:00 am (allow 2-3 hours)
November 10th Ridge to Bay Trail Part II Janet Byron 549-8008 and Charlie Bowen 540-7223
Take the #65, 10:00 sharp at Berkeley Bart, or the 10:05 on Euclid at the Rose Gardens. Reconvene at Shasta & Grizzly Peak at 10:30.
December 1st Eastshore State Park Susan Schwartz 848-9258
Meet at Sea Breeze Market University & Frontage Road
January 26th Town & Gown Interstices (Northside)
Jim Sharp 841-7271
Meet at Virginia and La Loma
February 16th Claremont Triangle Helen Wynne 845-5758
Meet at Ashby and Domingo
March 16th Nut hill Mardi Sicilar Mertens 949-1142 and Marilyn Siegel 549-2908
Meet at the west end of Rose Walk

Nov. 15th Karen Kemp Presents Her Watercolors & Discusses Visionaries Who Affected the Pathways

Hear Karen’s presentation at Live Oak Center, when she’ll discuss influences from Bernard Maybeck, Frederick Law Olmsted, and Garden City planners of England—from her book in progress, Finding Yourself in the Hills: the Berkeley Paths. You can email her at studio49@earthlink.net.

Tamalpais Steps & Other Paths Improved

Broken pavement on the Tamalpais Steps has been repaired by the City of Berkeley, using funds paid to compensate for the large redwoods that a neighbor cut without city permission. Although the trees will be missed, their absence opens up beautiful Bay views at the top of the 183 steps leading up from Codornices Park. The view of Mt. Tam makes the steps fit their name!

Public Works

Contractors working for the city also are beginning repairs on dangerously cracked Martinez Path, heavily used Easter Way, and other paths including Alta Vista and South Crossways. Billie Jean Walk is slated to get handrails. Thanks to Ken Erzeniemi of the Department of Public Works for working with us to choose which paths to improve and get the work underway.

Volunteers

Other path improvements have come from volunteers. On Sunday, September 30, BPWA Board Member Tom Edwards led volunteers from Congregation Beth El in installing four wood steps at the east end of Acacia Walk. The project was one of the synagogue’s Mizvah Day continued on back

Annual Hillside Club Meeting Well Attended

Sedge Thomson of West Coast Live moderated panels of Malcolm Margolin of Heyday Books, Steve Edwards of Tilden Botanic Gardens, and Richard Schwartz, Berkeley historian. It was a provocative discussion on geology, history, indian lore and botany in the East Bay.
Improved Paths continued

projects. Acacia Walk, from Cragmont down to Spruce, has beautiful views along a tree-shaded, nearly level path leading to concrete steps in good condition.

Scouts & UC Students

Improvement continued on Atlas Path, which runs from Grizzly Peak Boulevard nearly up to Tilden Park, and is a key-stone in our long-term plans for a Ridge-to-Bay urban trail. Berkeley Boy Scout Troop 6 put in a first group of wooden stairs at the top. On October 20, UC Berkeley students volunteering as part of the Cal Corps public-service day added another six steps. Three Eagle Scout candidates from Berkeley Troop 19 plan to complete the long, moderately steep path. When finished, Atlas will have more than 70 steps and, we hope, a seat at the top so walkers can rest and enjoy the sweeping Bay view.

If all goes well, path wanderers should be able to explore new "flatland" trails along creeks and the Bay in coming years.

Progress of Pathways Near the Shore

Most of us have been watching progress on the pedestrian/bicycle bridge joining Aquatic Park with the new Eastshore State Park and Berkeley Marina. Berkeley also is beginning to build its long-delayed portion of the Bay Trail along the narrow beach from University to Ashby, where it meets an already completed trail that continues south to the Emeryville Marina. This will make a wonderful shoreline walkway. Berkeley also has a grant to plan a bicycle/pedestrian link from the Bay Trail to the Berkeley Marina.

Berkeley M ontaner School’s interest in moving to the historic Santa Fe Railroad Station on University Avenue has breathed new vigor into the effort to open the Santa Fe Right of Way as a pedestrian trail from Strawberry Creek Park to the Ohlone Greenway. Berkeley Partners for Parks is asking citizens to ask their city council member to fund this new greenway out of a discretionary pedestrian improvement-related “HIP” grant. See BPFP’s website at www.bpfp.org.

Environmental reports are expected soon on the planned 1/2-mile creekside greenway along Codornices Creek, while complex trade-offs involve Albany sports fields, University Village student-family housing, and the University Village community gardens. Meanwhile, Friends of Five Creeks has opened a temporary trail — you can walk from 10th to 8th Street along the creek south of Harrison Street, on the Berkeley/Albany border.

Farther north, on the Albany/El Cerrito/Richmond border, Friends of Five Creeks is working on what eventually is to be another creekside greenway, along Cerrito Creek from the Ohlone Greenway to Pierce Street. For more information on these projects see their website at www.fivecreeks.org.

Setting the Record Straight

CORRECTIONS TO BERKELEY’S BYWAYS STORY LAST ISSUE.

From the water company and built their... .

Fountain Walk Of course, we all know the Fountain at the Marin Circle is standing about its restoration.

Janet Byron, founder of Friends of Strawberry Creek/leader for Greenbelt Alliance outings for 10 years and BPWA for four years, has come to deeply appreciate the wisdom that activists and planners showed in creating such an extensive path system, and wants to see it preserved and improved.

Janet believes that developing more livable cities is the key to preventing sprawl out into the Bay Area’s open spaces. She says, “Components such as paths, creeks, parks and such are among the amenities that make cities places where people want to be, not flee.”

As a board member of BPWA, she would work on creating a ridge-to-bay trail system that features paths and creeks. Also, she is interested in exploring positive ways to work with people who live alongside paths. Janet can be contacted at bjane@earthlink.net, or 848-4088.

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