

Berkeley's PATHS

A Newsletter of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, Fall 2000 Vol. 3 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 **Live Oak Park Rec. Center**

7-9 pm 1200 Shattuck Avenue

Nov. 16 General Meeting
Pathways & Wildfire Safety
by Bill McClung

Dec. 14 Board Meeting

Jan. 18 General Meeting
Origin & History of the Pathways
by Paul Grunland

Feb. 22 Board Meeting

Mar. 15 General Meeting
Berkeley's Early Byways
by Richard Schwartz

Path Walks **RAIN OR SHINE**

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

Nov. 4 Aquatic Park
Mark Liolios 549-0818
Meet at Channing Way parking lot

Dec 2 Summit Rd. and Selby Path Loop
Charlie Bowen 540-7223
Meet at Summit Road and Grizzly Peak

Jan. 20 Claremont Triangle
Helen Wynne 843-5738
Meet at Ashby and Domingo

Feb. 24 Ridge to Bay Trail, Part I
Janet Byron 848-4008
Meet at Tilden Nature Center. Bring \$1.35 (exact change) for return trip on bus.

Mar. 17 N.E. Pathways
Paul Grunland 526-8001
Meet at Euclid and Grizzly Peak

BPWA Supports Measures S and W

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association has endorsed Berkeley Measures S and W in the upcoming election. Both measures supply money to maintain Berkeley's parks, open space, city trees, and paths. Measure W authorizes the city to continue to spend the approximately \$6,250,000 collected under the present Park Maintenance Tax, approved in 1997. (The California Constitution requires renewing this approval every four years.) Measure S increases the maintenance tax approximately 10%.

In the past 23 years, Berkeley has more than doubled its acreage of parks and open space. Yet the resources avail-

able for maintenance have remained virtually the same, after adjusting for inflation.

Many of the pathways join parks and make them more accessible. Our interests require treasured open spaces to be kept usable and beautiful. Measures S & W can do that.



A stone urn marks the bottom of Indian Trail which leads upward to Great Stoneface Park.

Bill McClung Speaks About Pathways' Role in Wildfire Safety

Bill McClung will be our guest speaker November 16th discussing fire danger, fire safety and paths. He is co-owner of Shelter Belt Builders, a land management native vegetation restoration team, and has organized important volunteer clearing work on University properties and elsewhere. In addition he publishes a periodic newsletter, *News from the Buffer Zone*, dedicated to creating a beautiful biologically rich and wildfire-safe East Bay hills.

After the '91 fire and the loss of his home on Alvarado Road, Bill has been

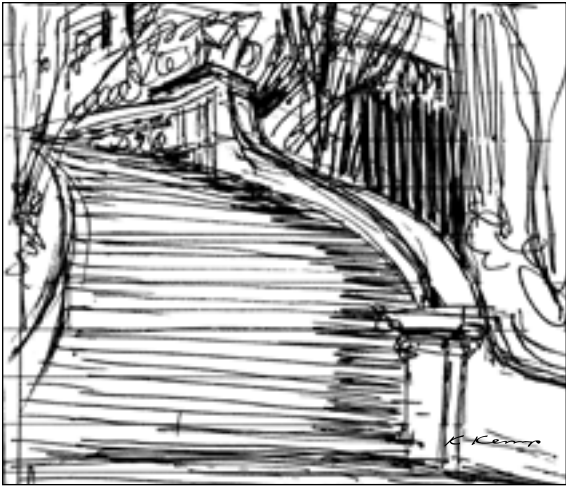
active in the management of vegetation at Urban Wild Land Interface.

He has worked with the City of Berkeley Fire Commission and volunteered with the El Cerrito and Kensington Fire Departments.

BPWA
1442A Walnut Street, #269
Berkeley, CA 94709



www.internetttime.com/path



In maintaining Orchard Lane we must preserve the integrity of its classical design. Tunbridge and The Cutoff (center), without special atmosphere, benefit by added railings. Whereas Visalia Walk poses more difficult aesthetic decisions with its historic ruins quality.

Improving Our Path Network

Efforts of volunteers and city government are beginning to nibble at the long backlog of much needed improvements to Berkeley's path network.

In the last fiscal year, partly due to Berkeley Path Wanderers' urging, the Department of Public Works repaired two dangerous paths in the Hinkel Park area: A foot-high "hump" was smoothed out and a new handrail added on Upton Lane (between San Luis and San Diego). And a splintery, unsafe handrail and deeply sunken pavement

were repaired on Tunbridge Lane (from Southhampton to Arlington).

A Bay-to-Ridge Trail

BPWA also is taking the first steps toward creating a pedestrian greenway from the hills to the Bay — a step called for in the Berkeley Planning Commission's new Draft General Plan. Janet Byron, active in Greenbelt Alliance as well as BPWA, is working with other members to plan a route that as much as possible will follow paths and Codornices Creek, or possibly Cerrito Creek. She will lead a walk along one possible route on February 24.



Neighbors Linda Bertolli, Richard Seals, Karen Libby and organizer Trena Cleland cleared Acacia Walk.

and removal of some obstructing day lilies would benefit this path. Four neighbors responded and showed up on the agreed upon Saturday afternoon with some tools in hand. They worked for an average of two hours, took a social break with beverages to say hello to each other and share their pride in the work they were accomplishing. The result was a more passable path and steps, and an aesthetically more pleasing path appearance.

An unintended consequence has benefitted the BPWA treasury. Two neighbors adjacent to the path expressed their pleasure, but noted conflicting demands on their time. Then they reached into their pockets to make unsolicited donations to the BPWA totalling \$48. And perhaps the greatest reward is that seven

Historic Ruins

The charm of many of the Berkeley paths is in part due to their "ruined" nature. We walk the paths for the joy of discovering what is around the next bend, wondering about the people who were inspired to create them 50-100 years ago. We note time passing through the natural effects as earth shifts and vegetation grows. Walls bulge outward, capitals lean, pulling away from their handrails. Foliage swallows up an entrance or obliterates the blue sky or bay view.

On Visalia Walk one must cross six canted steps and walk around boulders jutting across the path. While Mosswood Lane, tidy with freshly laid woodchips and colored in tropical greens, provides an intimate path tenderly cared for and aesthetically maintained. Indian Trail seems to have created itself, the hillside appearing to have pushed up stones from the earth to let them meander upwards.

The paths must be maintained. And while doing so we must maintain the beauty of wandering along the Berkeley paths and the surprises which await. A handrail can be helpful to steady one's footing or to help lift the weary wanderer. But we should be careful and considerate to the aesthetics and uniqueness of each path when deciding on how to renovate.

Preserving Safety

Is there a tradeoff between aesthetics and safety? Keeler Avenue Path, for example, at the edge of Remillard Park, now has improved drainage and simple wooden steps, but is easy to walk as a woodland path. Should safety require paving and handrails? BPWA might consult with the Berkeley Historical Society and Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association to identify the handful of paths where beauty and history should take precedence over safety.

Tell us what you think!

Which paths most need improvement? What changes would you like to see? What should be the balance between aesthetics and smooth paving with handrails? Write your opinions to BPWA, 1442A Walnut St., #269, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Path Adoption

Many BPWA members have expressed interest in adopting paths, or, more simply, in monitoring a path for the occasionally needed sweeping, raking or other type of grooming. The activity need not be highly organized unless you want it to be. A recent activity on Acacia Walk might serve as an example.

A neighbor who likes to use the public paths to reach public transportation issued an e-mail invitation to neighbors. She suggested that some raking, sweeping, pruning

neighbors now are more likely to exchange pleasantries and other neighborly acts of kindness.

The next time you see your favorite path in need, mention it to some neighbors and suggest that it would be fun to assemble a work party one afternoon.

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 _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

Email _____

Telephone _____