

News Flash!!

Buy maps, join, donate on-line

We have now added a secure payment function to our web site. You can buy maps, join, renew your membership, or donate to BPWA. You can also order maps or membership as gifts. Pay by credit card or with your PayPal account. Our web site: www.berkeleypaths.org

Path Walks

10:00 a.m. (allow 2-3 hours) Walks are free, and all are invited to attend. For additional information on walks please see our web site: www.berkeleypaths.org

Saturday Walks

January 7 • Beautiful Old and New Staircases

Susan Schwartz 848-9358 F5creeks@aol.com
• Meet at Live Oak Park on Walnut St. side

February 4 • Redwood Park Nature/Mushroom Walk

Robert Mackler rdmackler@aol.com
• Take Redwood Road entrance to Redwood Regional Park; meet in bottom parking lot. For a map, go to ebparks.org.

March 4 • Eugene O'Neill's Tao House, Danville

Jim Kantor
• Call 925-838-0249 for directions and reservations. Jim is UCB Archivist Emeritus and has been a docent at the Eugene O'Neill House for ten years. Tao House web site: <http://www.nps.gov/euon/>

First Wednesday Walks

January 4 • Thousand Oaks Walk

Jacque Ensign jacqueensign@earthlink.net
• Meet at Marin Circle.

February 1 • Pathways of Northeast Berkeley

Paul Grunland 510-526-8001
• Meet at the front entrance to the Environmental Education Center next to the Little Farm. A stroller-friendly, easy walk, no hills. Rain cancels.

March 1 • Santa Fe Right of Way, Present and Future

Susan Schwartz F5creeks@aol.com
• Meet in front of North Berkeley Bart Station, intersection of Shattuck Avenue and Center Street.

Berkeley's PATHS

A Newsletter of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association Winter 2005 Vol. 8 No. 4

A Holiday Message from the BPWA President

Since BPWA began in 1998, our path-building activities have been financed almost entirely through the City of Berkeley Mini-grant Program. These grants helped us pay for path-building materials while volunteers provided the muscle.

Unfortunately, the city has cut the Mini-grant Program from the budget. We now must look to fundraising to continue to meet our goals. Roughly thirty paths still are unfinished, and the developed paths need continual maintenance.

Although BPWA is committed to finding new sources of support, we need donations to continue our work. Our Unimproved Paths Program has great momentum,



but a typical stairway of 100 steps requires \$500 in wood and steel rebar. A survey to ensure that a new path is correctly sited on City property can cost \$1,000 or more. Your gift will enable us to continue our important work.

So please include BPWA in your annual giving (you can donate on our web site) and know that you will be helping to open new vistas to path walkers!

We also need new members. Our dues are still only \$5.00 a year, and we have deliberately kept them low

to encourage people to join. That fee covers the printing and mailing of our quarterly newsletter, our dues to Berkeley Partners for Parks, maintenance of our web site, and supplies for our walks and meetings.

You are most likely reading this newsletter because you already belong to BPWA. Please remember to renew your membership, which you can also do now on our web site or by returning the form on the other side of this newsletter.

We have some 600 members, which is impressive. But if the 12,000 maps we have sold are an indication, many more people are enjoying Berkeley's pathways.

We would like all path walkers to belong to BPWA. The more members we have, the louder our message to the city: Berkeley residents value and use the paths, and the pathways are worthy of city support. Membership numbers are also important when we submit grant proposals to foundations and other funding sources.

You can strengthen BPWA and increase our influence by giving memberships to friends and relatives. Use the mail-in coupon or the membership function on our web site to order gift memberships. Your gesture will delight each recipient, and you will be supporting our efforts to maintain and improve the paths and stairways we all cherish.

-- Emma Morris, Pres., BPWA

Newsletter continues on reverse side...

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

Board Members

EMMA MORRIS, chair
MARILYN SIEGEL, secretary/walks
SUE FERNSTROM, treasurer
PRESCOTT COLE, events
PAT DE VITO, archivist
JACQUE ENSIGN, maps
LISA FRIEDEN
SANDY FRIEDLAND, outreach/publicity
ELEANOR GIBSON, membership
MARY LYNCH, path improvement
PAUL MAHEU, Scouts liaison
WILL SCHIEBER, newsletter/website
BARBARA WEST, accounts

Meet the Paths: Acacia Steps *by Sandy Friedland*

With rustic stepping stones at its top and irises, daisies, and a rain-bow of cineraria along its borders, Acacia Steps is among Berkeley's loveliest paths. It is also a model of how neighbors, civic groups, and BPWA can collaborate to maintain our treasured walkways.

Linking Spruce Street and Cragmont Avenue high in northeast Berkeley, Acacia Steps is one of ten paths added to the new edition of the BPWA map. All were considered unsafe until city engineers and volunteers improved them. Last spring an Eagle Scout project along with BPWA path builders added 41 steps to the treacherous lower section.

Now the path is a favorite of families going to and from nearby Dorothy Bolte Park and First Step preschool and of commuters who catch the #67 bus on Spruce.

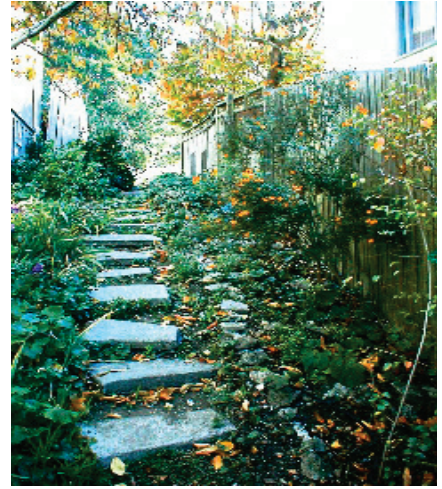
Acacia Steps still lacks signs, but

the bottom lies between the story-book-style, half-timbered houses at 537 and 543 Spruce. They are thought to be the work of Oakland architect Walter W. Dixon. On Cragmont, the path begins between #'s 598 and 600.

Long before the recent improvements, neighbors had shared their irrigation systems and gardening skills to beautify the path. The late physicist Harvey White, first director of Lawrence Hall of Science, lived at 543 Spruce and installed the stepping stones.

Neighbors are enthusiastic about the improvements to Acacia Steps. Eugenie Bruck, of 600 Cragmont, calls the path a "social center."

"It is so much more accessible now, and everyone just loves it," she says. "I meet the nicest people I wouldn't have gotten to know otherwise."



Acacia Steps

BPWA to be at Holiday Crafts Fair

Visit representatives of the Path Wanderers at the Berkeley Farmers' Market Holiday Crafts Fair in Civic Center Park on two Saturdays: December 10, and 17. We will be selling the latest edition of our Berkeley's Pathways map, a great stocking stuffer. We are sharing booth space with the Berkeley Historical Society at 1931 Center Street. The event runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on each of the two days.

How We Build a New Path *by Charlie Bowen*

Often I get questions about what is involved in transforming an overgrown and impassible City right-of-way into a walkable path with signs at top and bottom.

Upper Covert Path (#54 on our map), our most recent achievement, serves as an example of our path-building. Covert is a ten-foot-wide strip of public property that runs between Keeler and Cragmont Avenues. There are vacant lots to the north of the path, and the adjacent south addresses are 1146 Keeler and 1171 Cragmont.

We decided that Upper Covert was an excellent choice to build because there were no usable paths for between Keeler and Cragmont in this area. Also it is part of a series of paths that ultimately will lead from Keith Avenue up to Grizzly Peak Boulevard.

After conferring with the Public Works Department, BPWA commissioned a survey of the path boundaries. I then contacted the adjacent neighbors, who were very positive and cooperative. Everyone agreed that building the path would open more pedestrian options in the area.

Then we met with an engineer from Public Works at the path site to review our plans and get approval for actual construction.

We then began having work parties at regular intervals. Our construction crew consisted of BPWA volunteers and groups of high school and college students.

As usual, we borrowed tools from the Berkeley Tool Library. First we cleared the path route and then began measuring, digging, and placing the steps, using pre-cut wood and steel rebar. After nine work parties during the summer, we had installed 147 steps.

When the remaining steps have been installed, we will ask the City to place signposts at both ends of the path. Next summer we will see how the path is weathering and perform maintenance if needed. Meanwhile, we hope that people will discover and enjoy this nearly-completed path.

If you would like to join a work party, please contact me, Charlie Bowen, by phone (540-7223) or by e-mail (charlie_paths@comcast.net).

New BPWA Board Members

The Annual BPWA Meeting was September 15, 2005. The following eight Board members were elected:

Robert Armstrong (1st term)
Charlie Bowen (1st term)
Sandy Friedland (2nd term)
Lori Kohlstaedt (1st term)
Paul Maheu (2nd term)
Dale Miller (1st term)
Susan Schwartz (1st term)
Jerry Wachtel (1st term)

About BPWA

• Berkeley Path Wanderers Association is a volunteer group of community members who have come together to increase public awareness of the City of Berkeley's pathways. Our activities include path walks, identification and accurate mapping of Berkeley's path network, and the restoration of paths that have been blocked or obscured.

- Our activities are listed on our web site: www.berkeleypaths.org.
- Concerns about path issues? E-mail us at info@berkeleypaths.org
- BPWA is a member of Berkeley Partners for Parks, a 501c3 tax-exempt organization.

Household or gift memberships in BPWA are \$5.00, due January 1. Donations are welcomed. Benefits include a newsletter and other BPWA mailings. You can complete these transactions either on our web site or by mailing this form with check or money order, payable to:

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

If you are giving a membership for someone, please be sure to enclose the name and address of each recipient.

BPWA Donation/Membership Form Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip code _____

E-mail _____

Telephone number _____

I would like to donate \$ _____ for path-building

I am enclosing \$ _____ for membership(s) new renewal gift