

BPWA Guided Walks

Walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to all. Please check online a few days before each walk for any changes. Walks are divided into three types, identified by these icons:

 Theme  Friendly  Power

Please read the article on this page that explains changes to our walk program as well as our new walk categories.

Weekend Walks

 **April 18, Saturday - Improved and Impassible Paths - 10:00 AM**

Charlie Bowen - charlie_paths@comcast.net

Meet: Fountain across from New Hills Fire Station #7 - 3000 Shasta Rd. (1/2 block from Grizzly Peak Blvd.) Transit: AC #65 bus

Our path-building leader will cover many of the paths we've improved in recent years. We will also examine several not-yet-improved paths to show how much is involved in building the new paths. This walk is moderately strenuous.

 **May 9, Saturday - Claremont Heights, Grand View, and Hiller Highlands - 10:00AM**

Sandy Friedland - ssf@comcast.net

Meet: Peet's, 2912 Domingo Ave

Transit: Rockridge BART or AC #7,#9 buses

Walk the old paths behind the Claremont Hotel that once helped commuters reach the Key Route trains, and look for traces of paths that are no more. Learn about historic Smith Lane and the family that built it. (See article on page 2.) Finally, explore newer paths and streets in neighborhoods rebuilt after the 1991 Oakland-Berkeley firestorm. This route has long, steep hills and stairways, some with uneven footing.

 **June 21, Sunday - Daley's Scenic Park and Beyond - 6:00 PM**

Keith Skinner -

keithskinner.public@gmail.com 510 528-3246

Meet: Hillside School, 1581 Le Roy Ave.

Transit: AC #65 bus.

Wind down your weekend with a moderately paced excursion through the original stomping grounds of the Hillside Club. Although this first-ever weekend evening walk will not have a formal program, we'll stop and enjoy the architectural treasures and panoramic views on our way up to La Verada Rd. and back. Some steep climbs will be included.

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Berkeley's PATHS

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Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Spring 2009

BPWA Updates Walk Program


We have received valuable feedback from regular participants of our tremendously popular Wednesday and Saturday guided walks as well as from those of you who have had trouble making the dates and times. In response to your suggestions, we are pleased to announce that we have restructured our walk program so that the schedule is more flexible.


Each month we still plan to offer a weekday and weekend walk, but we will vary both the day of the week and the start time. Because our sunset walks were so popular last summer, we will try to include more of those on weekdays this summer. During the shorter days of winter, weekday walks will continue to be in mornings.


Because many of you noted that both our Wednesday and Saturday walks were often slated for the beginning of a month, we will try to ensure that we leave more time between them.

This changing walk schedule will take some getting used to. Please be sure to check the date and time of each walk, either in our newsletter or on our web site (www.berkeleypaths.org). The date and time will be clearly marked at the top of each walk description.

We also have decided to set up these three general categories of walks:

Theme Walks  Walks focusing on local history, art, architecture, the environment, and cultural heritage or other areas of special interest.

Friendly Walks  Casual walks led by someone familiar with the paths but without a formal theme or narration.

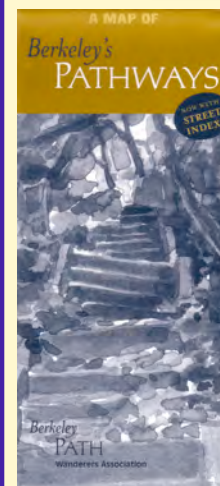
Power Walks  Energetic, fast-paced walks with a focus on exercise and no commentary along the way.

Every walk write-up will include the category of the walk; a description of the topography; and suggestions, when relevant, for useful equipment, like walking sticks, flashlights, or field glasses.

As always, our walks will be free of charge and open to BPWA members and nonmembers alike. BPWA maps and note cards will be available for purchase, and we will happily accept your \$5 membership dues.

We are eager to hear how you like these changes. You can comment, make suggestions, or even offer to lead a walk by contacting our walk coordinator, Keith Skinner, at keithskinner.public@gmail.com or 510 528-3246.

BPWA Map



This attractive and accurate map shows all the 135+ paths of Berkeley as well as all the streets. It is printed on sturdy, water-resistant paper and is only \$6.95. To order, see our web site.

The map is a wonderful gift for anyone who drives, bikes, or hikes in Berkeley.

Weekday Walks

Theme 🍀 Friendly 🧡 Power 🏃

April 1, Wednesday - Holy Hill - 10:00 AM

Barbara Robben
keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510 528-3246

Meet: Scenic Ave. at the intersection of LeConte & Ridge Rd. Transit: AC #52L or #65 buses.

As a thematic companion to her fascinating tour of churches in central Berkeley, Barbara will lead this exploration of the paths and institutions of Holy Hill.

May 26, Tuesday - Evening Cardio-Workout - 6:00 PM

Colleen Neff - colleenneff@earthlink.net - 510 882-4295

Meet: Berkeley Rose Garden (near sign), 1200 Euclid Ave. near Eunice.

Transit: AC #65 bus

Join Colleen for another fast-paced, up-hill, carb-burning walk up Easter Way to Cragmont Rock Park, Pinnacle and Poppy Paths to Muir Path and back down as the sun is setting

June 1, Monday - Albany Hill At Dusk - 7:00 PM

Susan Schwartz - f5creeks@aol.com - 510 848-9358

Meet: El Cerrito's Creekside Park, S. end of Santa Clara Ave. Transit: BART or AC #72 bus

The president of Friends of Five Creeks leads this annual evening walk co-sponsored by BPWA and F5C. We will cross Cerrito Creek on stepping stones, note Native American grinding stones, and climb Albany Hill on a narrow, fairly steep trail, gaining 300 ft. We'll enjoy snacks and sunset views and return via a gentler route. Wear shoes with good traction and long pants and sleeves to avoid poison oak. Bring flashlights and walking sticks if you use them.

Volunteer

Work in Booth - lbrad5501@sbcglobal.net,

Build Paths - charlie_paths@comcast.net,

Spruce up a Path - colleenneff@earthlink.net

Lead a Walk - keithskinner.public@gmail.com

BPWA Board Meetings

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month (except Feb, Sept, and Dec) at Music Sources, 1000 The Alameda (at Marin). Observers are welcome. Please enter via the side door at 1842 Marin Ave.

Old Paths Lead to Historic Smith Lane

— Sandy Friedland

Two rustic, unmarked paths and the private Smith Lane, which do not appear on any modern maps, are all that remain of the original Claremont Heights, a neighborhood of small, wood-clad houses and a thriving dairy farm above the Claremont Hotel. In 1991, the Berkeley-Oakland Hills Firestorm destroyed the subdivision.

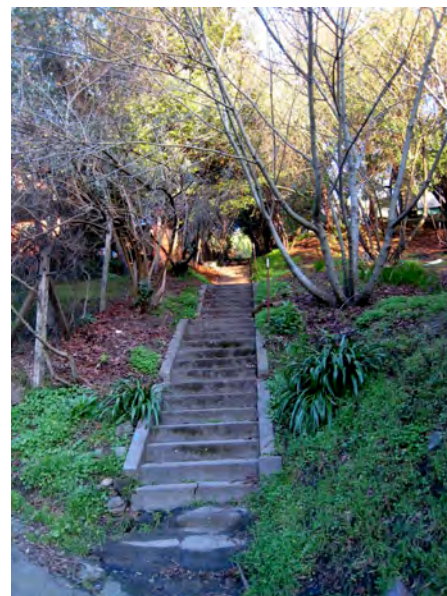
BPWA's May 9 walk will focus on the old paths and Smith Lane, a short dead end that runs between Vicente Place and West View Road.

Although Claremont Heights has a Berkeley zip code and children of the early residents attended Berkeley schools, it lies just over the Oakland border. A 1910 plat map shows five paths as well as residential lots lining parts of Grand View, West View and Gravatt Drives, and Vicente Road and Vicente Place. Part of the neighborhood appears in the lower right corner of the BPWA *Berkeley's Pathways* map, near the numeral 18.

The footpaths helped hikers to reach trails in the hills and adults and children bound for shops, schools, and the Key Route E-line train that stopped just below the hotel. Most of the paths gradually disappeared as they fell into disrepair, new houses went up after the fire, and residents removed the remaining steps.

A century ago, the hillside lots with panoramic views of the Bay attracted a young lawyer named L. Dee Smith. The 1906 San Francisco earthquake had ruined his office and his legal business, so he was working for the Claremont Heights Realty Office in Oakland. Smith picked three "choice villa sites" in the subdivision and built a large house of his own and eventually three smaller ones for his two sons and a daughter. Smith Lane was added to make it possible to build the houses.

In a 1960 article in the *Berkeley Gazette*, L. Dee's son Leroy wrote that his father, an Iowa native, bought a cow to supply milk to his growing family. One cow led to another, and soon a small herd grazed in the hills. The Smith Claremont Guernsey Dairy became known



Lower Vicente Path has no sign

for its rich milk, and the Smith children delivered it to neighbors, the Claremont Hotel, and Star Grocery.

The two surviving footpaths comprise what locals call Vicente Path. The lower half begins on Vicente Place, a short street linking Vicente Road and West View, just west of where Grand View and Vicente Road meet. From the Tunnel Road end of Vicente Road, Vicente Place is on the right, just before the sharp dogleg in Vicente Road. The path is 50 feet from the intersection on the right.

The steps lead to Smith Lane. At the top, the house to the left of the path looks like a 100-old original but was rebuilt after the fire. For years, Ellen Smith Caples lived on the site. L. Dee's farmhouse stood at the opposite end of Smith Lane, where an ornate gate now marks a grand new house.

The second part of the path, just above the first, ends at the aptly named West View. Half way down the block to the right is Elmo Park, a garden named for a dog that lives in the vaulted house beyond it. A path to Vicente Road once ran through what is now the garden. Continue down West View, turning left at the T to reach the new unnamed path that descends to North Hill Court, which goes to Hiller Drive.

Paths, Gorge, and Creek Beckon in Kensington — Glen Lindwall

From Colusa Ave. to The Arlington, an open segment of Cerrito Creek separates Berkeley and its neighbor to the north, Kensington. The cut of the creek and the hills it passes through create a landscape perfect for walking, and several paths on the Kensington side of the creek appear on the BPWA *Berkeley's Pathways* map.

Kensington's small shopping district on The Arlington, reachable by the #7 bus., is your starting point. Locate Ardmore Path by the sign near the parking lot, just off the lower level of The Arlington. Twenty-nine steps take you to a divided pathway with a median strip of exuberant plantings. A charming classic "path house" at #2 Ardmore Path directly faces the walkway. At Ardmore Rd., you may be tempted to stray to view some of its lovely homes, but don't wander too far because Ardmore Path continues straight downhill another block. Note the towering cypress trees that dwarf #7 Ardmore Path.

At the bottom, turn left and walk up Coventry Road, passing Ardmore Rd. on the left and Edgcroft on the right, to reach Eagle Hill, a narrow road on the right, with only a small sign, that resembles a driveway. Walk up Eagle Hill. Near the six-foot Santa at #1 (J. Robert Oppenheimer's former home), enjoy one

of the most spectacular panoramic views you will ever see from the middle of a street. Though the narrow dirt path along the wall at #1 ends near the top of a stairway leading down to Edgcroft Rd., you might prefer to go back down Eagle Hill, turn right on Coventry, and right again on Edgcroft. This more scenic route circles around to the classic stone cottage at #7 and past houses further down perched precariously over the gorge of Cerrito Creek. Daunting stairs drop at least 50 feet down the hillside to #33 and #35.

Continue around Edgcroft back to Coventry Rd. Between #744 and #748, is steep Coventry Path. At the bottom, turn right, and where the street forms a Y, you have two choices:

To return quickly to The Arlington, take the lower fork. A few houses down, between #69 and #73 Stratford Rd., head up Stratford Path. Go left on Coventry, and veer left onto Lenox. Follow Lenox until you reach the stairs on the right (labeled #9) that lead to the residential Beverly Court. Look for the palm garden at #17. Continue up to Ardmore and turn right. Ardmore Path, a block away, leads back to the start.

To extend your adventure, take the upper fork of the Y at the bottom of Coventry Path, go down Stratford Path between #673 and #679 Coventry, and turn right on Stratford Rd. If you continue more or less straight, you will reach Berkeley Park Blvd., which will take you past the reservoir and down to

Kensington Circle, where you can reward yourself with a visit to the original Semifreddi's or, if it's after 5 PM, the family-friendly Kensington Circus Pub. If it's Sunday between 10-2, visit the Kensington Farmer's Market. You can return to Berkeley on the #79 bus. Better yet, walk south on Colusa Ave, turn left on Visalia Ave, and then take every left until you reach The Arlington. You will see Cerrito Creek from the other side of the chasm and can climb a bonus path, the gnarled and scenic Vincente Walk set among the rocks.



The walk starts with the 29 steps of Ardmore Path.

Watch for BPWA at the BAHA Maybeck Country House Tour May 3, 1 to 5.
http://berkeleyheritage.com/housetours/2009_spring_house_tour.html

Tax-deductible household memberships in the BPWA are \$5.00 and cover one calendar year. If you can give more, please consider a donation. Benefits include a newsletter and other BPWA mailings and emails. You can join or donate online at www.berkeleypaths.org or by sending this form and a check, payable to our fiscal parent BPF (Berkeley Partners for Parks) to:

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

BPWA Membership/Donation Form

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Telephone Number (optional) _____

I am enclosing \$5 for membership new renewal

I am also enclosing a donation of _____

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Spring 2009

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

The Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, an affiliate of Berkeley Partners for Parks, 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 guided path walks, the mapping of Berkeley's path network, the building of paths that are proposed, and the restoration of those that need maintenance.

Our last winner was Frank Rubinfeld, one of six Path Wanderers who identified the nearly life-sized rhinoceros clay sculpture located on Keith Ave. just east (uphill) from Euclid Ave.



Recognize this raised-arm Buddha? Tell us where it is, and win a BPWA map and a mention in our next newsletter. Email your answer to ColleenNeff@earthlink.net, or send it to the address below, Attn: Colleen Neff. We will choose at random from the correct answers

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association
1442-A Walnut St. #269
Berkeley, CA 94709

www.berkeleypaths.org

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