





BPWA Walks

Guided walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. Self-guided walks have no leader, just a starting location and a suggested route. Check www.berkeleypaths.org for these routes and/or any last minute changes for any walk. People without internet access can call 510 520-3876. Walks are divided into four types:

-  Theme
-  No Theme (Friendly)
-  Power
-  Self Guided

July 7, Wednesday – Bret Harte Ramble – 6 p.m. [NO THEME]

Leader: Charlie Bowen. Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com 510-520-3876. Meeting Place: Berkeley Rose Garden - bench at the corner of Euclid & Eunice. Transit: AC #65 & 67 buses.

Enjoy a mid-summer evening of socializing or just plain walking. The walk will be moderate in pace but the terrain will be up and down. We'll cover a number of paths, including the Bret Hartes (Way & Path). Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.

SPECIAL EVENT

July 18, Sunday – BPWA Summer Event – 10:15 a.m. walk, 11:45 a. m. ceremony followed by picnic

Walk leaders: Colleen Neff and Sandy Friedland. Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com. 510-520-3876. Meeting Place: Glendale-LaLoma Park. Transit: AC #65 bus.

Kick off the festivities with a moderate walk with some steps and uphill climbs. We will make our way to the foot of the newly finished Northgate Path where we will pause for the 100th path ribbon cutting ceremony. We will return to the Glendale-LaLoma for a bring-your-own picnic lunch. Cake will be provided. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.


See Page 3 for more information

August 9, Monday – Pooches on the Paths – 6:30 p.m. [THEME]

Leaders: Skillet & Bronte. Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com. 510-520-3876. Meeting Place: Foot of Indian Rock path - Solano & The Alameda.

Transit: AC #25, AC #18 and AC# 7

NOTE: This walk is limited to 10 dogs so please RSVP with your dog's name. Your dog must be on leash, well-behaved and sociable to participate. Join dogs and their families for evening walkies and conviviality. Visit Indian Rock and Mortar Rock with a stopover in John Hinkle Park for a biscuit break. Well-behaved humans (even without dogs) permitted.

 **See next page for information on self-guided walks.**

Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 13 No. 2

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Summer 2010

The Nature of Berkeley: New Plaques on the Paths

— Sandy Friedland

The familiar green plaques that identify Berkeley's landmark buildings and historic neighborhoods have some smart new siblings: interpretive plaques commemorating the city's natural history. These new additions are intended to increase awareness of Berkeley's geological features as well as its creeks, native plants, and first inhabitants. The 12" by 18" plaques feature lovely botanical drawings by California naturalist and artist John Muir Laws and about 150 words of text.

The spark for the plaques was kindled nearly ten years ago when Berkeley Path Wanderers and Friends of Five Creeks jointly proposed — and the City Council endorsed — the creation of a “virtual trail” along Codornices Creek, from the Bay to the hills. Completion of the three segments that comprise Glendale Path, between 2004 and 2006, was a major step toward accomplishing that goal, and two of the first three natural history plaques now grace Glendale.

On Lower Glendale, which runs between Campus Dr. and Queens Rd., a “Creeks' Cradle” plaque describes the origins of the creeks and springs. On Upper Glendale, which spans a hairpin curve on Fairlawn Dr., a “Berkeley Hills Geology” plaque traces the origins of the Berkeley Hills. At Mortar Rock, another plaque explains how Native Americans wore the holes in the rock by grinding acorns with stone mortars.

Spearheading the Natural History Plaque Project is Susan Schwartz, president of Friends of Five Creeks and the first leader of BPWA's path building efforts. Her eyes light up when she talks about the “young” Berkeley hills that are still rising and the “little creeks that created amazingly large canyons.” She says that the history plaques around Berkeley enhanced her experience of walking through Berkeley, and

she thought they could be complemented with another chapter of Berkeley's story.



“I wanted to add geologic time as well as to remind people of nature that too often is hidden by concrete,” says Schwartz. “Our lives become richer if we can understand the world around us.”

Financing for the Plaque Project came from the Oakland-based Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment and the UC Berkeley Chancellor's Community Partnership Fund. Philip Krayna of Neuwirth Krayna Design, a Berkeley design firm, did the layouts for the plaques. Schwartz wrote the copy in collaboration with Doris Sloan, author of *Geology of the San Francisco Bay Region*, and Steve Edwards, who heads the East Bay Regional Park District Botanic Garden in Tilden.

A least two more plaques are planned, including one in the Claremont district that will explain the geology of the hills in South Berkeley and another in West Berkeley devoted to the origins of the flatlands. Schwartz welcomes ideas for other topics or locations for these delightful additions to Berkeley's landscape. E-mail her at F5creeks@aol.com

Walks Continued

☺ August 22, Sunday – Northeast Ramble – 4 p.m. [NO THEME]

Leader: Glen Lindwall. **Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com. 510-520-3876. Meeting Place:** Corner of Spruce and Halkin. **Transit:** AC #65 and AC #67

Work up an appetite before Sunday dinner while taking in several pleasant neighborhoods. The pace will be moderate but there will be some long, steep stair climbing. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.

☺ September 9, Thursday – Solano Stroll Warm-up – 6 p.m. [NO THEME]

Leader: Keith Skinner. **Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com. 510-520-3876. Meeting Place:** Lower El Paseo Path on Vicente near Colusa. **Transit:** AC bus #25

Enjoy an evening walk through the Thousand Oaks area and get your Solano Stroll muscles in shape. Moderate pace but some climbing. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.

🚶 September 25, Saturday – Hill Climbers Power Walk – 10 a.m. [POWER WALK]

Leader: Colleen Neff. **Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com. 510-520-3876. Meeting Place:** Codornices Park, picnic table near the slide. **Transit:** AC #65 bus.

Come prepared for serious hill climbing at a brisk pace. If you're looking for a workout with great views--this is it. Climb from Codornices Park up Buena Vista nearly to Lawrence Hall of Science via Wilson Walk and back. No dogs please.

🔍 FEATURED SELF-GUIDED WALK

Ridge to Bay Trail Walk

Starting Point: Shasta & Grizzly Peak (Shasta Gate). **Transit:** AC #65

Retrace the route from this November 2001 walk that was led by Janet Byron and Charlie Bowen. If you take public transit to the starting point, this is primarily a downhill walk.

http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_RidgeToBayTrail_2.htm

NOTE ABOUT SELF-GUIDED WALKS

The feedback we've received about the self-guided walks is that people enjoy the featured walks but generally prefer to take the walks on their own schedule. With that in mind, we will continue to feature one self-guided walk in each newsletter but no longer schedule a specific time for that walk. If you wish to follow one of these published routes, we recommend you bring along your BPWA Path Map.

Northgate Path: A Year, Forty Volunteers, Two Eagle Scouts and 233 Steps

—By Steve Glaeser, path builder

After More than a year's worth of effort "Charlie's Volunteers" cut the guardrail blocking the top of Northgate Path on March 28th. Northgate is the 100th official named path in the city's system (see next page). It was, by far, the most difficult path that we have tackled yet. The project required new tools and skills and many dedicated volunteers.

Forty individual community volunteers signed in for at least one of 18 weekend work parties. We were pleased to see so many friends: the collective effort of all those who could come only once or twice was as important as our much-loved regulars. Pathbuilding leader Charlie Bowen also led work parties for 4 service organizations, including three UC student groups and local high school students from buildOn (See our Spring 2010 Newsletter). Robert Loebel and Huntly Morrison each put in 25 steps as part of their Eagle Scout projects, helping reach the final total of 233 steps. My team installed the switchback steps at the bottom, took out the stump in the middle, and finally, cut the guardrail at the top, opening up Northgate Path.

Cutting the guardrail presented a new challenge. We do not normally work with metal, other than the 5/8" rebar that is used to secure the steps. First we needed approval from the city traffic engineer and the civil engineer. Then, because the 30 foot long guardrail had only 3 posts supporting it, we had to install a fourth post before we could cut. The website of The Crucible, an Oakland arts nonprofit, guided me to a source of the four foot long A500 (structural grade) 1/4" square steel tube that was perfect for the job. We found the specialized grade 5 bolt, with nut and washers that we needed at Bowlin Equipment on Tenth St., and a path wanderer donated fence post cement. We were assured that we could cut the guardrail ourselves with a Sawzall™. So we were all set. Except we had to drill a

5/8" hole through the guardrail and then perfectly straight through the two sides of the 1/4" steel post!



Cutting the Northgate Guardrail

We were relieved when it turned out that drilling the guardrail was easy. The Berkeley Tool Library has a TiN (Titanium Nitride) unibit, that went through the guardrail like it was butter. But drilling a straight hole through the post required a machine shop. Fortunately, the place I found was James Groom Company on Sixth Street. They work on the kind of sports cars that you only see driving around a race track. Half of the cars on the shop floor were wearing racing slicks. I had to concentrate hard, trying to keep my tongue from hanging out while staring at them.

James Groom was kind enough to donate his services, and our biggest problem had an easy solution. We installed the post, and a week later we cut the guardrail at our final community volunteer work-party. It was well attended, and we all got a well-earned sense of completion. The city has now installed a metal handrail, completing this complicated project.

We are now installing steps on Miller Path East (see photos on back page). Work is proceeding well despite our agony with the bamboo that covered half the path. If you would like to join us working on Miller Path East or future projects, please contact Charlie_paths@comcast.net.

Join BPWA for The Long Walk

BPWA's first day-long walk is planned for October 10, 2010. If you like the challenge of a long walk (about 5 hours), plan on joining us for our "Trail of Four Cities" trek covering paths in Oakland, Berkeley, Kensington and El Cerrito. This will begin and end at BART stations. Save the date: more details will be in the next newsletter.

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.

Celebrate Berkeley's 100th Path: BPWA Summer Event, July 18th

BPWA will officially dedicate Northgate Path, the city's 100th pedestrian pathway, at its annual summer event, Sunday, July 18, at Glendale-LaLoma Park. Festivities will begin with a 90-minute, moderately-paced ramble through the hills led by Sandy Friedland and Colleen Neff. Meet in the lower part of the park near the ball field at 10:15. The route will cover such rustic and charming paths, as Lower Covert, which meanders through the woods and across a seasonal stream. Be prepared for stairs and some irregular terrain, but the pace will allow for conversation and pauses to enjoy the views.

At 11:45, we will gather at the bottom of Northgate Path for a dedication and ribbon cutting for our newest and most impressive path. After the ceremony we will trek up the Northgate steps back to Glendale-La Loma Park for a bring-your-own-lunch picnic. BPWA will provide lemonade and a delicious carrot cake.

How can we call Northgate Path number 100 when our map shows about 130 completed paths? Gary McDole, an astute and dedicated Path Wanderer, wrote to let us know that Northgate will be the 100th path in the city-wide system of named and numbered paths. Many paths such as the Ohlone Greenway, paths on campus or paths in parks are not counted in that system and paths with multiple segments only get counted once. Still, when counted only by name, Northgate makes an even 100. What a great excuse to celebrate! Join us as we dedicate this beautiful addition to the path system.

Betty Olds: Friend to Berkeley's Paths

—Colleen Neff

Berkeley residents and visitors who love to walk the paths have many people behind the scenes to thank, including BPWA's founders, board members, and many volunteers. A key individual is former Berkeley city councilwoman Betty Olds. When the fledgling BPWA was holding its first community meetings, Betty was there to lend support. As a long-time walker and hills resident, Betty was irritated at the number of paths that were closed off by fences, shrubbery and other blockages. She felt strongly that these city-owned public walkways should be developed and opened to the public.



Betty Olds

Betty worked tirelessly with neighbors, the BPWA and city officials to resolve disputes and open new pathways. When asked for financial help, Betty's office provided the \$2,000 seed money needed to finance the first printing of the hugely successful BPWA map. Now in its 5th printing, the map of all the city's pathways continues to be the indispensable walker's guide to Berkeley. Without Betty's help, this project may never have gotten off the ground.

Betty's hand was evident when city officials attended the 2002 rededication of Anne Brower Path and when the Berkeley city council named May 2004 Berkeley Path Wanderers Month. Her support was crucial in opening the three-part Glendale Path. The city engineered and constructed concrete stairs for a very steep section of Glendale at the cost of \$75,000. Betty recognized that these critical stairways could serve as vital escape routes from the hills in case of fire, and promoted the use of funds from a FEMA grant to pay for them.

Betty sums up that "as a past council member, there are so many things that don't have good outcomes, but the paths are so positive for the city. They are a success story that politicians yearn for. The timing of the BPWA's formation was just right. The city had money to give." And the BPWA had Betty Olds as its champion.

We hope you join us on July 18th for our Summer Event walk and stay for the celebration where Betty Olds will help open our newest path.

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

I am interested in volunteering

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Summer 2010

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.



Workparties on Miller Path
Here are several recent photos of BPWA volunteers working to transform Miller Path East from an impassible thicket to a walker's treasure. This section of Miller Path provides access from Grizzly Peak Blvd. to Creston Rd in the North Berkeley Hills. The path should be open later this year.



Berkeley Path Wanderers Association
1442-A Walnut St. #269
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www.berkeleypaths.org

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If you see "Mem 10" after your name, you are currently paid through this year. "Renew Now" indicates that your membership has expired and you must renew in order to receive the Fall newsletter. You can renew online or send in the form on page three with a check made out to our fiscal parent BPPF.