

Berkeley's PATHS

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, the identification and accurate mapping of Berkeley's complete path network, and the eventual restoration of paths that have been blocked or obscured.

A Newsletter of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association Spring 2005 Vol. 8 No. 1

Reflections from our ex-Board Members

Path Walks RAIN OR SHINE
10:00 am (allow 2-3 hours)
Walks are free and all are invited to attend.

Saturday Walks

Apr 9 Improved Paths

Charlie Bowen - 540-7223
charlie_paths@comcast.net

• Meet at the Park Hills fountain at Shasta and Park Hills Rds. for a chance to view first-hand our recently improved and partly improved paths, including Columbia Path, Glendale Path, and Wilson Walk. Fairly strenuous, steep stairways, hills.

May 21 Panoramic Way

Ron Sipherd

<http://www.well.com/~ronks/pix/panowalk>

• Meet at foot of Panoramic at south end of football stadium. An insider's look at this unique neighborhood. Rain cancels due to hilly paths. Moderate pace. Allow ten minutes for parking.

June 4 North Berkeley Architecture

Alan Kaplan - 526-7609 tnairea@ebparks.org

• Meet at Euclid St. entrance to Berkeley Rose Garden. Moderate pace; some stairs.

First Wednesday Walks

Apr 6 Wildland/Urban Interface

Paul Grunland - 526-8001

• Summit Reservoir at Grizzly Peak & Spruce St. Second in a series of walks, much of it on Tilden Park trails. Moderate pace. Heavy rain cancels.

May 4 Aquatic Park

Emma Morris - 525-4894

emmakathrynmorris@yahoo.com

• Meet at Aquatic Park Playground for a stroller-friendly and wheelchair-accessible walk. Go to Sixth and Addison Sts. Take Addison 5 blocks west, turn left on Bolivar, park at end of road.

June 1 Panoramic Way

Ron Sipherd

<http://www.well.com/~ronks/pix/panowalk>

• Repeat of May 21st Saturday walk.

December 2004 saw the retirement of six key members of the Board of Directors of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association. Some of these people, who generously volunteered their time, have served the organization from its inception. We would like to express our thanks to these former Board members and, in this special issue, let them express themselves about the "Pathwanderers".

Charlie speaks...

Sometime in 1998 I attended a BPWA meeting at which I volunteered to be on the first Board of Directors. Gradually, I discovered the existence of paths unknown to me. But the most exciting discovery for me was that there were nearly fifty pathways that were completely neglected and unimproved. I determined to see them become actual paths.

In 2001 I created the Unimproved Paths Committee and we began to gather detailed information about the exact location and condition of all the unimproved paths. By 2003 we started having community volunteer work parties to build new paths. We now have a pool of experienced and enthusiastic workers, and we all are enjoying the whole process enormously.

--- Charlie Bowen

Jay's vision...

About five years ago, Jacque Ensign and I were trudging up the incline in John Hinkle Park; it was my second Saturday morning walk with the Path Wanderers. I asked if BPWA would like to establish a presence on the web to make announcements. She encouraged me to go right ahead. Creating the web site allowed me to post the calendar of events, path photographs, path lore, and links to related sites. Hundreds of people continue to visit the web site. Serving as BPWA's webmaster has been a heartwarming job during which I learned that nearly everyone, it seems, loves the paths.

--- Jay Cross

Tom's thoughts...

My first introduction to the BPWA occurred in 1999 during a Berkeley Historical Society walking tour being led by Paul Grunland who mentioned that a group had formed for the preservation of Berkeley's public paths. That was the beginning of my association with the "Pathwanderers".

I was invited to one of the first public meetings at Live Oak Park Recreation Center, wrote my check for \$5.00 and began my journey of returning to the community some of the benefits that I had received. I found myself becoming increasingly involved in scouting out unde-

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

Board Members

EMMA MORRIS, chair
PAT DE VITO, archivist
JACQUE ENSIGN, BPWA map
SUE FERNSTROM, treasurer
LISA FRIEDEN
SANDY FRIEDLAND, outreach/publicity
ELEANOR GIBSON, membership
PAUL MAHEU, scouts liaison
*PRESCOTT COLE, events
*MARY LYNCH, path improvement
*MARILYN SIEGEL, secretary/walks
*WILL SCHIEBER, newsletter/website
*BARBARA WEST, accounts
* new member, 2005

Reflections... (cont.)

veloped paths, mapping the paths, recruiting "path tenders", participating in construction projects, photographing path walks, attending mailing parties, composing newsletter articles, writing the new bylaws, balancing the budget and helping in any additional fashion that I could.

In my estimation, BPWA has a bright future because of its grassroots orientation, its modest overhead costs and its wide resource base of volunteers. I expect that the BPWA will continue on an expanded basis as long as the human race occupies this land named Berkeley!

--- Tom Edwards

Alan reflects...

I met Jacque Ensign at the Solano Stroll table for BPWA in 1998. "You have to join this organization," she said, and I did. She later said it would be nice if I led a walk up at the Tilden Nature Area sometime, and I did that, too, with the theme of *Tilden Nature Area History: from the lost escudo to the EEC*. I led an architectural history walk in North Berkeley (and will do so again on June 4, 2005), and participated in the Solano Stroll outreach efforts which, years earlier, had brought me into the group.

I dug holes for steps with Charlie Bowen, and marched in a *How Berkeley Can You Be?* parade dressed up (more or less) as **Rose Walk**. Writing an article on Charles Keeler, civic leader and bad poet,

was a great opportunity for me to advance the cause of "Berkeley's forgotten man", and I enjoyed presenting a talk on *Urban Birds and their Songs* at a general meeting in the spring of 2004. Our association is people and activities and the paths, and I have enjoyed my contacts with all of you.

--- Alan Kaplan

Karen's story...

When I was eighteen years old commuting from Walnut Creek to San Francisco, I was told that an old lady had made a map of stairways in the Berkeley hills. It sounded like a treasure map to me, having spent weekends of my youth wandering the Mt. Diablo foothills.

Nearly twenty years later, on a near whim I decided to write a book: to find out about the stairs, their history, and the people around them. To begin my search I set off to find that elusive map. By happenstance I met Eleanor Gibson, discovered BPWA, and within several months I was on the young board. As resident graphic designer I transformed the newsletter from paste up to digital, and along with contributing my watercolors of paths, gave BPWA a visual identity. Meanwhile BPWA evolved from a needle in the City's side to a trusted collaborator.

Path walks on Saturdays, monthly evening meetings; I devoured path history, and marveled at the complimentary skills of all the board members: political, administrative,

financial...social activism. What a warm and welcome ride it has been.

I never found that original map. But as one of six map committee members, we made our own. Perhaps one day the old lady will be me.

--- Karen Kemp

Susan's contribution...

I feel very lucky to have come along at the right time, and more or less stumbled onto the initial board of BPWA. I remember my surprised discovery, years before, of platted paths that were blocked by fences or vegetation. What a joy to find a group eager to do something about that, along with maintaining and repairing the beautiful paths and steps already built.

Because I already organized work parties for Friends of Five Creeks, it was easy for me to focus on what volunteers could do. With Paul Maheu and Boy Scouts of Troop 19, we worked out ways to install steps and improve drainage. Berkeley Parks Department Mini-Grants provided money for materials.

Our smaller program -- improving a couple of paths a year -- has now gone into high gear with Charlie Bowen's great leadership. I'm happy to be able to lead walks, do publicity, and otherwise help the new Board as the organization continues to flourish.

--- Susan Schwartz



For more information please see our web site at:
www.berkeleypaths.org

If you have any concerns about path issues please e-mail us at info@berkeleypaths.org.

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

We need money for path construction

For the first time we are coming to our membership with a plea for money for path-building materials. City funding for this purpose is no longer available due to budget cuts. Because we have been accelerating path building, we need to buy more materials than in years past. Please help us by sending your tax-deductible donation to:

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association
1442A Walnut Street #269
Berkeley, CA 94709



See a missing sign or graffiti?

- Please report missing path signs to Sandy Friedland, ssf@comcast.net
- Graffiti can be reported to the city by calling 644-6620.

Annual membership in Berkeley Path Wanderers Association is \$5.00 per household, due **January 1st** of each year. Donations are always welcome. Benefits include a newsletter, and BPWA mailings.

Mail form (opposite) with check or money order, payable to:

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

BPWA Membership Form Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

E-mail _____

Telephone _____