

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association
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COLLEEN NEFF, walks, map maintenance

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association Winter 2014-15

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 group of community volunteers who work to increase public awareness of Berkeley's pathways. Our activities include guided walks, mapping Berkeley's path network, building paths on previously inaccessible city-own rights-of-way, and maintaining the rustic paths with wooden steps.

Get your new, 7th edition of *Berkeley and Its Pathways* at these vendors:

Berkeley Ace Hardware
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Pegasus Books, Solano, Shattuck
Pendragon Books, Rockridge
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Turtle Island Book Shop
UC Berkeley Botanical Garden
Visit Berkeley Info. Center



We need more pictures like this one for the path section of our website. Send your favorite high quality shots to info@berkeleypaths.org

Berkeley's PATHS

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New BPWA Map, Improved Website Make Path Wandering Easier than Ever

By Sandy Friedland

We proudly announce the arrival of the 7th edition of our classic map and the redesign of our website. We're doing all we can to help you take a great walk!

Our path map has sold more than 32,000 copies since the first edition appeared in 2002. To emphasize that it also is a terrific street map, we decided to re-name it *Berkeley and Its Pathways*. The cover also features new artwork, a reproduction of Kathy Goss's watercolor of El Mirador Path.

The map itself is more accurate and readable, with bright new colors. Colleen Neff, chair of the BPWA map committee, started collecting corrections and suggestions soon after publication of the 6th edition.

"I was very lucky to have a team who know Berkeley's streets and path really well," she said. "They worked hard to make this the most accurate and user friendly map of our city."

Other improvements include the addition of the recently completed Betty Olds Path and Upper Halkin Walk, better contrast between major and minor streets, and a truer rendering of Garber Park.

The map also shows the new access paths on each end of the Buchanan Street pedestrian and bicycle "bridge" that goes under Highway 80/580, providing a safe route to the Bay Trail.

As always, the new map is on tear-and-water-resistant paper and has bicycle boulevards, BART lines and stations, and street barriers. It also in-

cludes some paths in Strawberry Canyon, Tilden Park, Kensington, Eastshore State Park, and Cesar Chavez Park.

Our revamped website debuted in October as we unpacked the new maps. However, the upgrade actually began two years ago, when former BPWA board member Mary Lynch converted the site to WordPress, a website design and management program. John Kenny, our current web master, continues to build on Mary's foundation.

The most notable change is our new home page. It now features rotating photos of our past events, clear links to future ones, and a simpler, more intuitive menu. One-click "hot buttons" make it easy to join BPWA or buy a map.

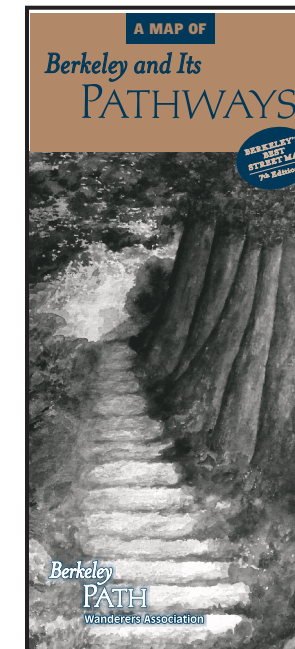
John also enhanced the path section of the website. A roster of paths can be viewed either numerically or alphabetically. Each name links to a page with pictures of that path and an interactive map of its location. A table gives statistics, like the elevation gain.

In addition, the list of places that sell our map has been updated, and each name links to that vendor's website.

Still to come, says John, are refinements in the self-guided walk section. "I'd like to see ten curated walk descriptions that each will reliably guide people along an interesting route."

He adds that the archive of past BPWA walks also will be reorganized. Routes will link to any supplementary materials that leaders handed out.

So get our new map and hit the paths, or explore them from your chair at berkeleypaths.org. Or do both!



BPWA Walks

Walks proceed at 1.5 to 2 mph and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to all. Questions about a walk? Well in advance of the date, write: walks@berkeleypaths.org
Weather cancellations will be posted the morning of the walk on berkeleypaths.org
Well-behaved dogs on leashes are okay unless a descriptions says they are not.

New Year's Resolution Walk

Thursday, January 1 @ 1 p.m.

Leader: Glen Lindwall

Start: SW corner of The Arlington & Coventry Rd., Kensington (at bus stop)

Transit: AC Bus #7

Welcome 2015 with BPWA once again as we walk near the Berkeley-Kensington border on the first afternoon of the year. With steps and steep streets, this 3+-mile walk will help burn off those extra holiday calories. We may walk along the ridge line again or cruise the paths below The Arlington if the higher trails are too muddy.

Little Free Libraries Tour

Saturday, January 10 @ 10 a.m.

Leader: Colleen Neff

Start: Live Oak Park Community Center, 1301 Shattuck Ave. near Berryman.

Transit: AC Buses #7 and #18

Little Free Libraries have become a worldwide phenomenon, and they are popping up all over Berkeley. (See story on p. 3) Join us for a 3.5-mile walk to visit at least seven of these book-sharing structures in North Berkeley. We'll also chat with some of the library stewards about their experiences. If you'd like, bring a book or two to exchange at one of our stops. The walk will be moderately paced with hills and steps.

Pooches, Poems, Parks & Paths

Friday, February 13 @ 4 p.m.

Leaders: Wally & Figgy

Start: NE corner of Solano Avenue and The Alameda

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

Love is in the air in February, so come with us as we explore some of what we adore in Berkeley. Two of our four-footed members, Wally and Figgy, will lead this leisurely two-mile, dog-friendly walk. We'll visit their favorite parks in the Thousand Oaks area and the poetry wall on upper Yosemite Steps. With luck, we might spot a goat. Count on a well-deserved dog biscuit break at John Hinkel Park. The route includes a few uphill paths and a rustic one

(Walks continued)

**Coffee Constitutional: 1000 Oaks
Monday, February 16 @ 2 p.m.**

Leader: Jacque Ensign
Start: Peet's on Upper Solano
Transit: AC buses #7, #18, and #25
From Peet's, we will stroll up to upper Yosemite Steps, where we will read some poems on the poetry wall. If you'd like you can bring an original poem to post or one by your favorite poet. We also will see Frederick, Great Stone Face, Mortar Rock, and Indian Rock Parks. We'll return for our second cup of coffee via the four-part Indian Rock Path. This route has some hilly streets, steps, and one unpaved path.

**"I Spy Bingo" for Grownups
Sunday, March 8 @ 3:30 p.m. (Daylight Savings time!)**

Leader: Sandy Friedland
For Start and Transit: please RSVP to berkeleywalker@gmail.com for location and transit information

Calling all sharp-eyed wanderers for this adult-version of Sandy's popular West Berkeley Bingo walk for kids. You'll get a map of the flat, paved, two-mile route and a game card containing pictures of yard art and colorful details from murals. Your challenge will be to find them all as you walk at your own pace. If you spot everything on your card, you'll have a chance to win a Berkeley Path Wanderers tee shirt. At 5:15, finished or not, we'll meet back at Acme Bar, 2115 San Pablo, where you can join us for a cocktail or soft drink. No dogs, please. Limit: 25 participants.

Please respond by March 1.

**Treasure Island and Yerba Buena
Sunday, March 22 @ 10 a.m.**

Leader: Kay Englund
Start: Outside white Art Deco building on Treasure Island Road

Transit: See driving directions on our website. Carpooling recommended*

Enjoy spectacular views of the City, the East Bay, and the Bay Bridge from a perspective you may never have had before. This 4+-mile walk will include both historic sites, and new development, including six wineries. The first half of the route is on sidewalks on flat, man-made Treasure Island. Then we'll walk over the causeway for the more aerobic half of our hike on Yerba Buena, a natural, rocky island that serves as anchorage for the Bay Bridge. No matter how beautiful the day, expect stiff Bay breezes for the first part of the hike.

* If you need a ride or can take extra people, contact: walks@berkeleypaths.org

BPWA President's Year-End Message

By Lori Kohlstaedt

We finish 2014 with one new path opened and another on the way. Upper Halkin Walk, between Euclid and Hilldale Avenues, was completed in April. Because it rises 84 feet in a single block, we needed a series of tricky switchbacks. The steep grade also meant that handrails were essential, and they are by far the most expensive path improvement we make. Paying for them from our modest treasury was a serious stretch and our path-building budget had to be limited for the rest of this year.

BPWA's path-building Hotshots now are



— Photo by Brendan A. Carruthers
Cal students cleared overhead vines on El Mirador Path on Berkeley Project Day.

finishing Tilden Path. By early next year, it will provide a pleasant new way to walk from Grizzly Peak Boulevard to Shasta Road.

Since 1998, BPWA volunteers have cut the number of unfinished, inaccessible paths in half, from 50 to 25 of Berkeley's 136 numbered public pathways. As we draw nearer to having a completely walkable path network, we are turning toward maintaining and improving those paths.

For years BPWA has partnered with other groups to trim and weed along paths. Last

month, for example, Cal students pitched in on Berkeley Project Day on El Mirador Path. In a couple of hours, they pruned thick overhanging vegetation, pulled weeds, and swept debris until both the segments of the path were clean and easily passable.

In fact, we are starting a new volunteer group to concentrate on path maintenance and beautification. To join, please send a message to info@berkeleypaths.org.

BPWA's guided walks continue to be wildly popular, with fifty or more enthusiasts turning up for some. Highlights this year included the challenging all-paths-in-Berkeley series, planned and led by our two youngest Path Wanderers, Zeke Gerwein and Jacob Lehmann Duke; Past President Keith Skinner's Right-Brained Berkeley walk that explored the city's creative heritage; and a walk highlighting sites related to the Anza Trail, led by Ranger Hale Sergeant. His walk was a followup to his illustrated presentation at our annual meeting.

With so many points of historical, artistic, and quirky appeal along our paths, it seems that we never run out of fascinating walks. The 24 walks planned for 2015 promise to be just as terrific.

As this year comes to a close, it is time to renew your BPWA membership and to consider giving maps, notecards, posters or other BPWA items to friends and family. Please also consider sending a donation to support our valuable path-building, educational, and walk programs. The results of your generosity will be visible when you take a walk.

See you on the paths!



— Photo by Steve Glaeser
Handrails make steep Upper Halkin Walk safer.



When a steward of a new library registers it, the organization issues an official charter sign and a number. The library shown on the far left stands on Shattuck, near the end of Walnut. Two ceramic birds sit on top, and colorful spigot handles decorate the sides. The other library is on The Arlington, close to Kensington. It features a solar collector that powers lights that go on as it gets dark. Borrowers often leave notes inside for the owners.

— Photos by Colleen Neff

Little Free Libraries Add Literature to the Landscape

By Colleen Neff

What are those structures popping up along the sidewalks of Berkeley? Big birdhouses? Doll houses? Or are they micro homes that might actually be affordable in this crazy real estate market? Nope. None of the above! They are Berkeley's contribution to a fast growing, worldwide phenomenon called Little Free Libraries.

We now have more than 25 of these charming mini-libraries, and new ones are appearing. They have become neighborhood meeting spots for book lovers of all ages.

The movement started in 2009, when Todd Bol, a resident of Hudson, Wisconsin, built a small replica of a one-room schoolhouse to honor his late mother, who had been a teacher. He perched it on a post outside his home and filled it with books. They were free to passersby, who returned them or brought other books to share. Soon Bol and a friend launched the Little Free Library nonprofit.

Their early goal was to build more than 2,509 little libraries, the number of libraries that philanthropist Andrew Carnegie built between 1883 and 1929. Today more than 18,000 Little Libraries in 60 countries are officially registered at LittleFreeLibrary.org

The website enables you search for the closest library to you and offers both kits and built-to-order libraries. Prices range from \$175 to \$1000. But given that this is Berkeley, we have lots of whimsical original versions.

For example, who can resist the library on Santa Fe Ave with a living roof that is near several community gardens? Or the tall, thin, three-shelved box on the Arlington that is lit by a solar panel? Or the one on Sonoma near Nielsen made from a wooden wine crate? Or the first Little Library in Berkeley up on Santa Barbara near Marin (registered as #1449), with the small notebook to sign out your books?

Each library has its own personality and a steward, as the owners and caretakers of the little libraries are called. One of the sweetest free libraries in Berkeley graces the front yard of Linda Davis on Parker Street. A miniature banner flies on top, announcing the poem of the day inside, and a homemade curtain decorates the window.

Ms. Davis describes the library as "a real neighborhood project." The dedication ceremony in November, 2013, included tea, cookies, and lots of

folks from the block who had pitched in with the construction.

"Children's books are the hardest to keep stocked in the library," she says. "They just fly out the door!"

But caring for her library has not been without its difficulties and heartbreak. Several times, the entire contents of the Little Library have been stolen. Ms. Davis's neighbors speculated that someone may have tried to sell the books to a second-hand store.

Hoping to protect her stock from future theft, Ms. Davis now places a red stamp inside the cover of each book, which reads: "Always a gift; never for sale. This book is from a Little Free Library."

BPWA's guided walk on January 10th will feature many of the Little Free Libraries in North Berkeley. It will start at the Live Oak Community Center at 10 a.m. (See details on page 1.) So grab a book you no longer need and join us. Leave a book, and take another. What better way to start the new year than by sharing the love of reading with your community!

(A version of this story, with additional pictures, was published on Berkeleyside.com on October 28.)