

The Wanderer

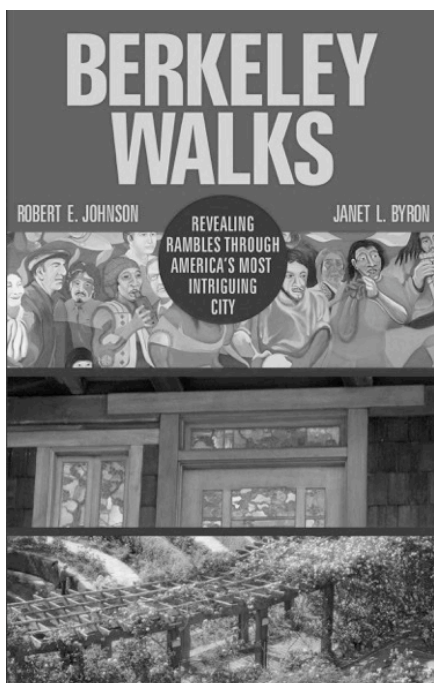
Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

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Wander Through Berkeley On Foot With New Guidebook In Hand

By Sandy Friedland

Here's a great reason to leave your car home this holiday season: the new guidebook *Berkeley Walks*. With 18 routes across the city, it will delight newcomers



and natives alike.

Co-authors Robert Johnson and Janet Byron took three years to write, edit, and road test the book. The results, they say, are "revealing rambles through America's most intriguing city."

Both Johnson and Byron are seasoned hike leaders, nature lovers, and long-time Berkeley residents with a sharp eye for their hometown's charms.

Every route map in their book has numbered highlights that

correspond to informative annotations. Walkers are steered toward historical sites, architectural jewels, lively street scenes, whimsical yard art, creeks and waterfalls, geological formations, parks, houses of Berkeley luminaries, and much more. Johnson's black and white photographs complement the text.

The book brims with fascinating tidbits, like the locations of the Temple of Black Sect Tantrict Buddhism, the apartment where Bill and Hillary Rodham lived during the summer of 1971, and the former site of the largest soap distributor in the country.

Architecture buffs will enjoy the sidebar "spotlights" on six of Berkeley's stellar architects as well as an illustrated guide to Berkeley's architectural styles and a glossary of common architectural terms.

History hounds will find essays on topics from BART in Berkeley to Saving Berkeley's Waterfront.

Seven of the more hilly routes include paths or stairways. The Codornices Creek walk has 11 of them, including the 180-step Tamalpais Path.

"We love Berkeley Path Wanderers and tried to use the paths whenever we could," says Byron, an early editor of our newsletter. Both she and Johnson have led walks for BPWA. They mention us and our *Berkeley and its Pathways* map in their book.

Berkeley Walks is for sale in local book stores, on our website (berkeleypaths.org/books/), and directly from the authors' website: (berkeleywalks.com).

BPWA Walks

Walks proceed at 1.5 to 2 mph, last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted, and are free and open to all. Questions about a walk? Well in advance of the date, please write us at: walks@berkeleypaths.org
Weather cancellations will be posted the morning of the walk on berkeleypaths.org
Please note: Our walks have become so popular that we no longer can accommodate your dogs except on our Pooches on the Paths walks.

Stepping Into The New Year

Friday, Jan 1 @ 1 p.m.

Leaders: Glen Lindwall and Steve Barr

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

Welcome 2016 with BPWA as we once again take our traditional walk in the neighborhoods along the Berkeley-Kensington border. We may stay close to the ridgeline as we have on previous New Year's walks, or we may cruise the paths below The Arlington if the higher trails are too muddy. The pace will be moderate, but expect to get your first aerobic workout of the year on lots of stairs.

Coffee Constitutional

Tuesday, Jan. 19 @ 9:30 a.m.

Leader: Jacque Ensign

Start: Café Strada, SW corner of College and Bancroft

The online magazine *Complex* rates Café Strada as one of the top 50 campus coffee shops in America. After we sample some of its Joe, we will stroll through the northeast corner of campus to Memorial Stadium for a guided tour, including the spectacular University Club sky deck. On the way back, we'll stop by the International House and visit the historic Panoramic Hill neighborhood. This two-mile route has some stairways without handrails.

Valentine's Day Fitness Walk

Sunday, Feb. 14 @ 10 a.m.

Leader: Charlie Bowen

Start: Top of Rose Garden (Euclid Ave. between Eunice St. and Bayview Pl.)

Do your heart a favor on this fast-paced workout on the North Berkeley paths. Our route will loosely incorporate interval training, with each heart-thumping climb followed by a recovery period on a descent or flat segment. Sorry, this 4.5-mile walk, with many stairs and steep streets, is not for the faint of heart. We won't wait for stragglers or take breaks. But you'll definitely burn some calories, so you can relish your Valentine's Day chocolates.

(Walks Continued)

**West Berkeley's Little Free Libraries
Saturday, Feb 20 @ 10 a.m.**

Leader: Colleen Neff
Start: Corner of Hopkins St. and Peralta Ave.
Join us for a fun, moderately paced 3+ mile walk around West Berkeley to find Little Free Libraries, which are popping up all over town. We'll talk to some owner-creators of these neighborhood gems and also see some whimsical yard art, community gardens, and parks along the way. This mostly flat walk will be on sidewalks and paved pathways. Feel free to bring a book to deposit in one of the libraries or to peruse their "collections" for new reading material.

**Mosaic Stairways of San Francisco
Sunday, March 6 @ 1 p.m.**

Leaders: Sophia Lehmann and Jacob Lehmann Duke
Start: Bottom of steps @ 32nd Ave. and California St.
(See berkeleypaths.org for transit info)

This vigorous six-mile walk begins at the foot of the 57 beautifully tiled Lincoln Park Steps. Artist Aileen Barr will meet us to describe the designing and building of this elaborate new mosaic. Then we will wend our way through the Richmond and Sunset Districts, passing through Golden Gate Park, to reach two more gorgeous mosaic stairways: the Hidden Garden Steps and the 16th Avenue Tiled Steps Project. Finally, we'll see the elegant homes, parks, and fountains of St. Francis Wood neighborhood, ending at the Muni Station at West Portal Ave. and Ulloa St. This walk will take about three hours and has numerous steps, some of them steep.

**Pooches on the Paths
Southern Comfort:
The Parks of South Berkeley
Wednesday, March 30 @ 5p.m.**

Leaders: Wally & Figgy
Start: SW corner of San Pablo Park (Mabel & Russell Sts.) @ picnic tables

Flat is where it's at in the Southern installment of our "All the Parks in Berkeley" series. We'll start at Berkeley's oldest park, San Pablo Park, and head out at a leisurely pace to visit six more. Of course, we'll stop at the Dachshund House, where we'll see who can spot the most wiener-dog art at this outdoor mutt museum. Whether you discover a new place to play tennis or your dog finds some of the best smelling grass in town, we trust you'll both enjoy this tour. The route is just over three miles.

President's Year-End Message

Thanks For A Year of Varied, Wonderful Walks

By Lori Kohlstaedt

For my valedictory, I would like to sing the praises of our walking program. Each month, we offer two or more guided outings in our beautiful, walkable city or in surrounding communities. We have choices for everyone, from treasure hunts for energetic kids, to power walks for the

frozen treats.

On the urban foraging walk, led by wild foods expert Philip Stark and his colleagues, we grazed our way through parks and pathways. I guess my preferences reveal my Berkeley inner foodie, but I wish I could have joined our Lefty Berkeley walk, so I also could have indulged my political preferences.



Photo by Neil Mishalov

(From left) Incoming walk coordinators, Heather Schooler and Sophia Lehmann, and the outgoing ones, Colleen Neff and Kay Englund, bracket Zeke Gerwein and Jacob Lehmann Duke, who led our El Cerrito Power Walk last month.

cardio crowd, to coffee constitutionals for folks who need a leisurely pace.

We vary the time and day of the walks so there will be something to fit everyone's schedule. Our leaders take us through both our vibrant urban core and along Berkeley's pathway network, where we can experience the peace of a redwood grove or the babbling of a creek.

Although we are always ready simply to wander along our paths, many of our walks have themes. We had so many great ones last year, it's hard to pick out just a few to mention. Two of my favorites were our ice cream walk and our urban foraging walk. The ice cream walk, led by Glen Lindwall, coincided with National Ice Cream Month. We began by making hand-cranked ice cream and ended with savoring it. Along the way, we stopped at two shops to sample their delicious

Although all our walks are a delight, our core purpose is to celebrate Berkeley's precious path network. With many of our walks now attracting fifty or more, we have introduced new people to our fabulous stairways and paths.

You could bring the delights of our paths to your friends and family this season by giving them a BPWA membership. For only \$5 per household, you would give priceless pleasures for their feet and spirits.

Remember, also, your year-end donation and membership renewal (both fully tax deductible) enable us to open new paths and maintain the older ones. Handrails are one of the most expensive improvements we make. If you know someone who would especially appreciate more handrails on paths, consider donating to our handrail fund in their name.



Photo by John Kenny

Can you name these path-building tools?* In the early days of our work parties, we borrowed tools from Berkeley's Tool Lending Library. Thanks to our map sales and donations, we now have our own cache. We buy the wood ties from Green Waste Recycled for \$17 apiece.

*Beneath the level, from left, are a pick mattock, a hand mattock, a small sledgehammer, and a scoop shovel.

Colleen Neff and Kay Englund have been our dedicated walk coordinators. Next year Colleen will be president and Kay vice president. Two new Board members, Heather Schooler and Sophia Lehmann, will take over walks. Sophia will be ably assisted by her son Jacob, who with Zeke Gerwein, led our walk-every-path series and several fast-paced power hikes. Expect another year of terrific path adventures!

Building Safe Paths Takes Time, Patience, and Precision

[Editor's Note: A major goal of Berkeley Path Wanderers Association is to complete the city-owned rights-of-way that were set aside for public pathways but were never developed. Since 1997, our volunteers have finished 33 of those 50 paths. Veteran path builder John Kenny explains just how we go about it.]

We want new paths that are safe, comfortable to walk on, and can be built and maintained by volunteers. Over the years, we have improved our materials and construction techniques and gotten much better at tackling steep slopes.

Before we begin a path, we get a

professional survey. The rights-of-way are narrow — only ten feet wide — so it's vital to know exactly where the edges are.

With those boundaries established, we inspect the terrain and begin to plan the best layout for the path. Often, we first have to clear away heavy vegetation that has covered a path for years. When we finally can see the ground, we measure the slope and distances to determine how many steps we will need and how far apart to space them.

Once we have the plan and buy the materials, our big tools come out. Placing and firmly securing each step is slow, dirty work with three distinct stages.



Volunteer path builder Bob Zucker checks a new step on Acacia Walk to make sure it's level before he hammers in the rebar. Each fifty-pound wood tie step may have to be picked up and adjusted repeatedly until it's perfectly seated.

Photo by Steve Glaeser

First, using a pick mattock and a shovel, we carve a rough notch in the dirt. Although this can be physically demanding, it usually goes more quickly than the next stage.

The second stage is the most important for safety. Using a hand mattock and shovel, we adjust the rough notch so the step is correctly positioned. It must be level from side to side and front to back. The top of each step must be the same height as the bottom of the step above it, and the distance between them — usually 12 to 14 inches — has to be correct.

In addition, the surface on which the step is placed must be flat and well packed so that the step won't move. Achieving this precision can be exhausting and frustrating. After each adjustment, we move the 50-pound wood step into place, and we take all the measurements again. We repeat this process until every measurement is perfect.

Finally, comes the fun part: putting in the rebar. We use a sledgehammer to pound a 30-inch long piece of rebar through a hole at each end of a step and into the ground. With hard ground, it can take quite a few blows to finish installing the step. But the reward is worth it. We're six inches closer to the top of the path!

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Berkeley Path Wanderers Association Winter 2015-16

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, an affiliate of Berkeley Partners for Parks, is dedicated to the creation, preservation, and restoration of public paths and stairways for the use and enjoyment of all. We are community volunteers who work to increase awareness of Berkeley's pathways. Our activities include offering guided walks, mapping Berkeley's path network, and building and maintaining the paths with wood-tie steps on previously inaccessible city-owned rights-of ways.

Thank you to these vendors for carrying our *Berkeley and Its Pathways* map:

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Berkeley Hort
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Books, Inc. (new location on Shattuck)
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These were some of the sharp-eyed stalkers who played Bear Hunt Bingo on campus with us in October. They spotted 25 critters, including this back-to-back pair at Haas Business School.