

# MORE BERKELEY WALKS- SERIES 4

by Robert E. Johnson

The walks feature:

- \* fascinating tidbits on architecture, famous people, street trees and more
- \* color photos
- \* maps with marked walking route and numbered stops coordinated with text
- \* highlights, distance and elevation gain and how to get to the starting point

## WALK 31- FROM THE ALAMEDA TO ALBANY

Bridging the Berkeley-Albany border, the pleasant residential streets provide ample autumn colors and glimpses of Blackberry Creek. The upper Solano commercial area is another feature and the uphill sections are not steep. 1.9-3.75 miles; 285-335 feet elevation gain



## WALK 32- NORTHWEST OF DOWNTOWN



Close to downtown but little known, this neighborhood features a rich mix of residences ranging from late 1800s Victorians to 1960s apartments. Linear Ohlone Park and Berkeley Totland provide open space and most of the streets have relatively little traffic. It is a pleasant, fairly flat walk at almost any season with various options for shortcuts. 1.1-3.2 miles; 120 feet elevation gain.

## WALK 33- SHASTA TO THE UPPER CAMPUS

The steepest walk is in one of the last developed areas of Berkeley which was planted heavily in eucalyptus. It now offers a variety of home styles and some views as well as good exercise. There are virtually no sidewalks but most streets have light traffic. 3.2 miles; 650 feet total elevation gain



## Walk 31

# From The Alameda to Albany

**Overview:** The Thousand Oaks area north of Solano Avenue and west from The Alameda features diverse early twentieth century residences and a generally very pleasant walking environment with only modest uphill sections. Extending into Albany the walk includes some tree-lined blocks that are quite impressive for autumn colors.

**Highlights:**

- \* Tree-lined residential streets with fine autumn tints
- \* Glimpses of Blackberry Creek
- \* The commercial area of upper Solano Avenue

**Distance:** 3.75 miles; 1.9-2.9 miles with shortcuts

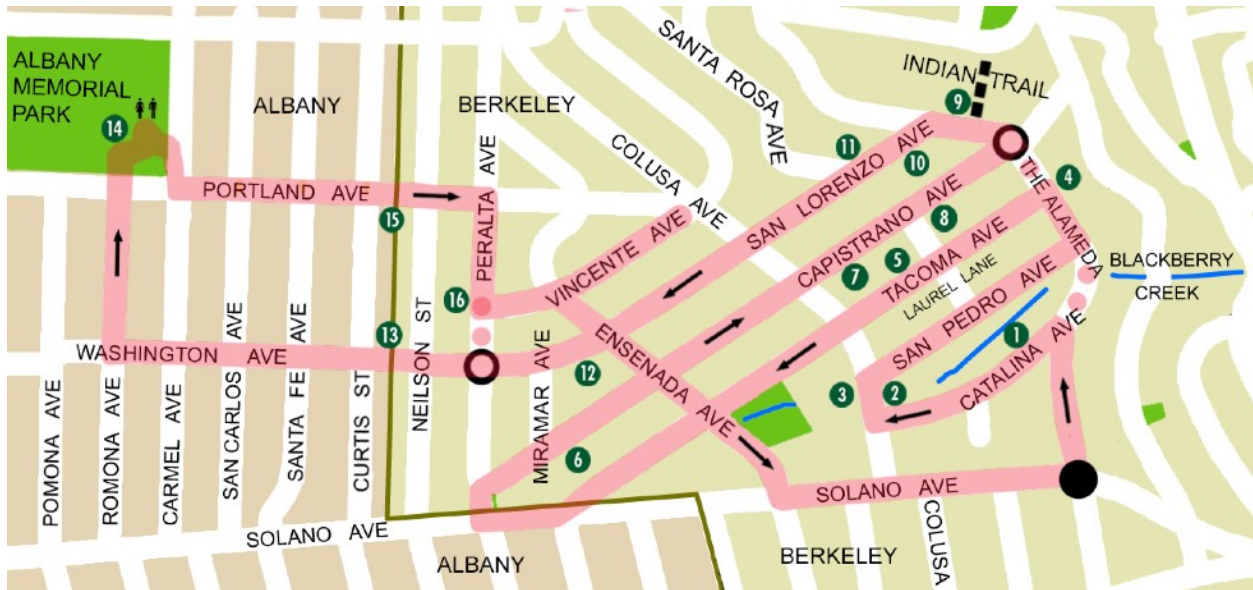
**Elevation gain:** 335 feet; 285 feet with shortcuts

**Getting there:** Start from the northwest corner of The Alameda and Solano Avenue. It is accessible by AC Transit such as Line 18. Parking is usually available further north on The Alameda or on various side streets.

This area saw a rapid buildout after Berkeley lost the 1908 vote to become the state capital and a proposed park fell short of the needed two-thirds majority in the same election. Moreover, Berkeley had a booming population after the 1906 earthquake and the commuter train service on Solano was a further boost to growth. Many of the streets in this area were named after California counties or cities as part of the unsuccessful effort to promote it as the state capital location. This is another walk that is good for autumn leaf viewing in late October to early December.

Head north on The Alameda (with the hills to your right); cross Catalina and go left down this street, perhaps named after Santa Catalina island. Behind the houses on the right the land drops down into Blackberry Creek, a tributary of Cerrito Creek. You can probably get glimpses of the creek looking down between the houses especially just before and after 1879 Catalina (1) and you may also see a footbridge there. The houses on this block are mainly stucco bungalows with craftsman or Mediterranean elements. On the left you can see the backs of some of the commercial buildings on Solano by looking up the little side street called Station Place.

As you approach Colusa Avenue on your right is the Thousand Oaks Baptist Church (2) shared by Grace Presbyterian Church (mainly a Korean-American congregation). The site is also home to Ashby Village, a non-profit focusing on services and programs for seniors to remain active and independent in their homes and communities. On the opposite side of the compound is Andrew University, a non-profit which claims to be



the first university of “well-being.” In fact, it offers degrees in holistic humanities and holistic spirituality. Founded in 1995 it accepts only 10-20 students per year.

On the other side of Colusa is the Thousand Oaks School (3). This low rise building in stucco was built in 2000 in a U-shape to replace the older brown shingle school, following considerable controversy about demolishing the historic buildings as well as public input on the new design. The original school was built in 1920, designed by William Hayes, a UC professor of architecture, but it was altered and expanded several times. The stream goes under the church and the school. Turn right on Colusa and then right again on San Pedro Avenue, named after a southern California city.

The residences west of The Alameda in this area are generally not designed by well known architects but the buildings are varied with pleasing features and gardens and the tree-lined streets usually have little traffic. In autumn this street also has brilliantly colored leaves of sweet gums and other trees. Go left on the Alameda. When you get to the end of the block the corner yard on the near left has a very large Canary Island palm. Cross Tacoma Avenue and looking right to the other side of The Alameda there is a persimmon tree (4) between two houses (741 and 735 The Alameda) that has brilliant reddish orange leaves and orange fruit in early to mid autumn.

Turn left on Tacoma, for some reason named after the city in Washington state. This block, like a number of others in Berkeley, used to be lined almost entirely with tall American elm trees with their soaring umbrella-like shape. Unfortunately most have been cut down in recent years due to Dutch Elm disease, but other trees are being planted, particularly red-leaf oaks. There are American Colonial style homes, such as at 1884 Tacoma—the second house on the left with columned porch and shutters—and also Craftsman homes among other styles on this block.

About halfway down the block you will notice Laurel Lane which runs through to the parallel streets north and south of this--such alleys are not very common in Berkeley and perhaps this one was added because the blocks are so long. Many of the homes on Tacoma are a bit larger and have grander entrances than those on the two parallel



streets we initially walked on. Examples are the Colonial Revival residence at 1833 (5) and The American Colonial house at 1829 Tacoma, built in 1922 and 1920 respectively, which have grander entrances than usual for this neighborhood.

At the next corner use the pedestrian signal to cross Colusa Avenue and cross back to the left side to keep heading in a sort of southwest direction on Tacoma, going along the side of Thousand Oaks School. Just past the playground enter the small park behind the school through the gate. If there is a chain with a lock on it, this can usually



**Blackberry Creek**

be pulled up to release the gate. If it is really locked shut there is another entrance to the park farther down the street. Head to the right of the playground equipment and note a display board with tiles painted by students. From there take the steps down and go to the left to see Blackberry Creek. When the school was rebuilt, the creek was day-lighted in this section (brought out of its culvert to be a natural creek again), both as an educational tool and an environmental plus for the area. Willows and other native plants have quickly grown up along the stream.

Now take the path toward the other end of the park; it curves to come out again on Tacoma. Turn left to continue going southwest on Tacoma, crossing Ensenada Avenue (named for a city in Baja California).

One block farther along at Solano Avenue bear right and cross to the other side of Tacoma in the crosswalk to head down Solano. Along this block are some Tibetan shops, Solano Cellars, the Stone Room with minerals and fossils, Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers, other shops and eateries and the Albany Animal Hospital. Turn right at Peralta Avenue (named for the family which had a huge Spanish land grant in this part of the East Bay) where there is a little plaza used for a band playing carols at Christmas and for other events. At the end of the short block turn right on Capistrano Avenue (though the street sign is hard to see). The street is named for the San Juan Capistrano Spanish mission.

There are red leaf ornamental flowering plum trees on the opposite side at the next corner. Then at 1618 (6) and 1624 Capistrano there are large native manzanita shrubs in the front yards with peeling red bark, and the one at 1624 leans over the sidewalk. They can be more like small trees than shrubs. Across the street are some sweet gum trees. Just beyond on the other side at 1635 Capistrano is a stucco house in colorful

pastels. Then at 1669 Capistrano is a 1925 stucco house with a beautiful large multi-paned curving window on the front.

In the next block past Ensenada between 1719 and 1727 Capistrano on the left is another large Canary Island palm (7) while between 1744 and 1750 on the right is a very tall Washingtonia desert fan palm, giving you a chance to identify these two popular large palms by the very different leaves, the Washingtonia fronds having a fan shape. The latter are found in southern California desert springs (e.g. the Palm Springs area and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park).

Proceed up Capistrano and very carefully cross Colusa (where the drivers go rather fast and don't seem to feel the state law on yielding to pedestrians applies to this street). On the southeast corner of Capistrano and Colusa at 801 Colusa (8) is a 1916 Berkeley brown shingle house with large gables and attractive window lattices on all four sides and a jerkinhead roofline. Continue up Capistrano. The first part of the street is lined with pink flowering plum trees which bloom in late winter/early spring, usually at their best in February. You will notice that as you get closer to The Alameda the houses generally seem to get somewhat larger. There are also several small-leaved Chinese pistache trees on the left side that have brilliant autumn tints. On the right you will pass the other end of Laurel Lane that we mentioned earlier.



**Canary Island Palm on Capistrano**

The house at the southeast corner with Laurel Lane has striking colors. A little past Laurel at 1861 Capistrano is a modest 1925 house on the left that has an elongated roof for the porte cochere over the driveway that would seem meant for a grander house. Farther along next to the sidewalk in front of an American Colonial style house at 1870 Capistrano is a "make a wish" tree although most of the wishes have faded too much to be read. When you turn left on The Alameda look across to the other side of the street to see a row of four paperbark trees (*meleleuca linariifolia*) that when in flower in summer look like giant broccoli dipped in cream. Even viewing from this side you can see the peeling cushiony bark that provides the common name.

When you get to 706 The Alameda look across the street to see a giant cement urn (9), the only original of many that adorned the Thousand Oaks development as a promotional feature. Next to it the Indian Trail climbs up the hill with some rough hewn boulders as steps. This trail is covered in the Rock Parks walk in the original *Berkeley Walks* book.

If you are running short of time you can cut the walk short by turning around to head back south on The Alameda (with the hills to your left) to the starting point. Otherwise continue on going north on The Alameda.

At the near corner with San Lorenzo there is a large 1912 Craftsman house (address is 700 The Alameda) from 1915 with finely detailed windows. Turn left to head southwest on San Lorenzo Avenue. At 1884 San Lorenzo (10) is a 1925 house with extensive stucco ornamentation and windows that seem to combine Gothic with the Arabian Nights, quite different from anything else in the neighborhood. It is the former home of abstract expression painter and innovative printmaker Karl Albert Kasten who also taught at UC Berkeley until 1983 but continued artwork until his death in 2010.



**1863 San Lorenzo**

At Santa Rosa Avenue the 1922 house on the northeast corner with the address of 1863 San Lorenzo (11) has a one story entryway with two story wings behind it angling off in both directions so that it takes good advantage of the angled corner and provides an upper terrace over the entry area. Farther along 1830 San Lorenzo is a Spanish style house with red tile roof and wooden balcony. The tile is not ceramic but has similar protective features without the heavy weight. When you get to Colusa again cross carefully and keep heading southwest on San Lorenzo.

Lots of stucco California and Craftsman bungalows are in this

block. Shortly after Ensenada the house on the left at 1668 San Lorenzo (12) has a large garden with a wide wooden bridge over a seasonal creek.

**Shortcut option:** To shorten the walk a bit go right a little farther along San Lorenzo at Peralta Avenue and then turn right on Vincente Avenue where you are together with the longer loop again. Jump ahead in the text to \*\*\*

To continue the full walk (add 20-30 minutes) and particularly recommended if it is autumn and/or you would like a restroom, proceed down San Lorenzo. The street gets wider and changes its name to Washington Avenue as you enter Albany after passing Neilson Street. The street in Albany is lined primarily with sweet gum trees that put out bright colors in mid to late autumn. In this climate the trees seem to hold their leaves a long time and not all the trees turn at once so there is a long period of fall tints often continuing even into December. On the right you pass St Alban's Episcopal Church (13).



About three blocks down the street from St Albans's (that is from Curtis Street) cross Washington to the right where there is a stop sign at Carmel and continue west on Washington for one more block. At Ramona look across Washington where the corner house has many small animal statues (805 Ramona) but then turn right on Ramona and proceed one block toward the Veterans' Memorial Park. The first and latter parts of this block of Ramona have some camphor trees with their bright non-deciduous green or red leaves that are fragrant when crushed; they are very disruptive to sidewalks, however, and some are being replaced. There are also a couple of purple-flowering jacaranda trees with finely divided fern-like leaves.

Take the crosswalk to the park across Portland Avenue; head toward the 1932 Veterans' Memorial Building (14) which is in Spanish Mission Revival style with sculpted ornamentation and a soldier's bust in the gable, scalloped stucco around the large window on the left and decorated tiles on the lower wall near the doors and under the left window.



**Veterans' Memorial Building**

Then go right on the paved path, passing to the left of the playground (and perhaps for fun walking on the spongy artificial ground material). The restrooms are farther to the left just before the

barbecue area. Afterwards take the path around the other side of the playground back to Portland Avenue. At the stop sign go katty corner crossing Portland and Carmel Avenues and go left up Portland (toward the hills).

Three blocks farther along at the southeast corner with Curtis (701 and 701 1/2 Curtis) is a pair of English style cottages (15) from 1932, a contrast to the prevalent bungalow style in this neighborhood.

After two more blocks up Portland go right on Peralta Avenue and left on Vincente Avenue (just after a gnarly Brazilian pepper tree (*Schinus molle*) next to the street at 762 Peralta (16) where you rejoin with the shortcut.\*\*\*

The first block has more red leaf flowering plum trees. The second block of Vincente after Ensenada is lined with brilliantly colored sweet gum and ginkgo trees in mid to late autumn—the combination makes for one of loveliest spots for autumn leaves in Berkeley if the timing is right.

Return to Ensenada and go left. Proceed on this street to Solano Avenue. You can also return by going right on Colusa from Vincente but Ensenada is much quieter. Either way at Solano go left up through the popular commercial district to the starting point or stop for a bite to eat or a beverage along the way.

## Walk 32

# Northwest of Downtown

**Overview:** Despite its proximity to downtown Berkeley, this is a fairly quiet residential area with tree-lined streets and mainly single family homes. There are a few 19th century houses but most were built in the early 20th century. The linear Ohlone Park runs through the area and it is quite flat for easy walking.

**Highlights:**

- \* Various tree species that feature both spring flowers and autumn colors
- \* Diverse historic architecture as well as more recent multi-unit buildings
- \* Ohlone Park with BART running underneath and Berkeley Totland

**Distance:** 3.2 miles; 1.1 or 2.3 miles with shortcuts

**Elevation gain:** 120 feet, or less with shortcuts

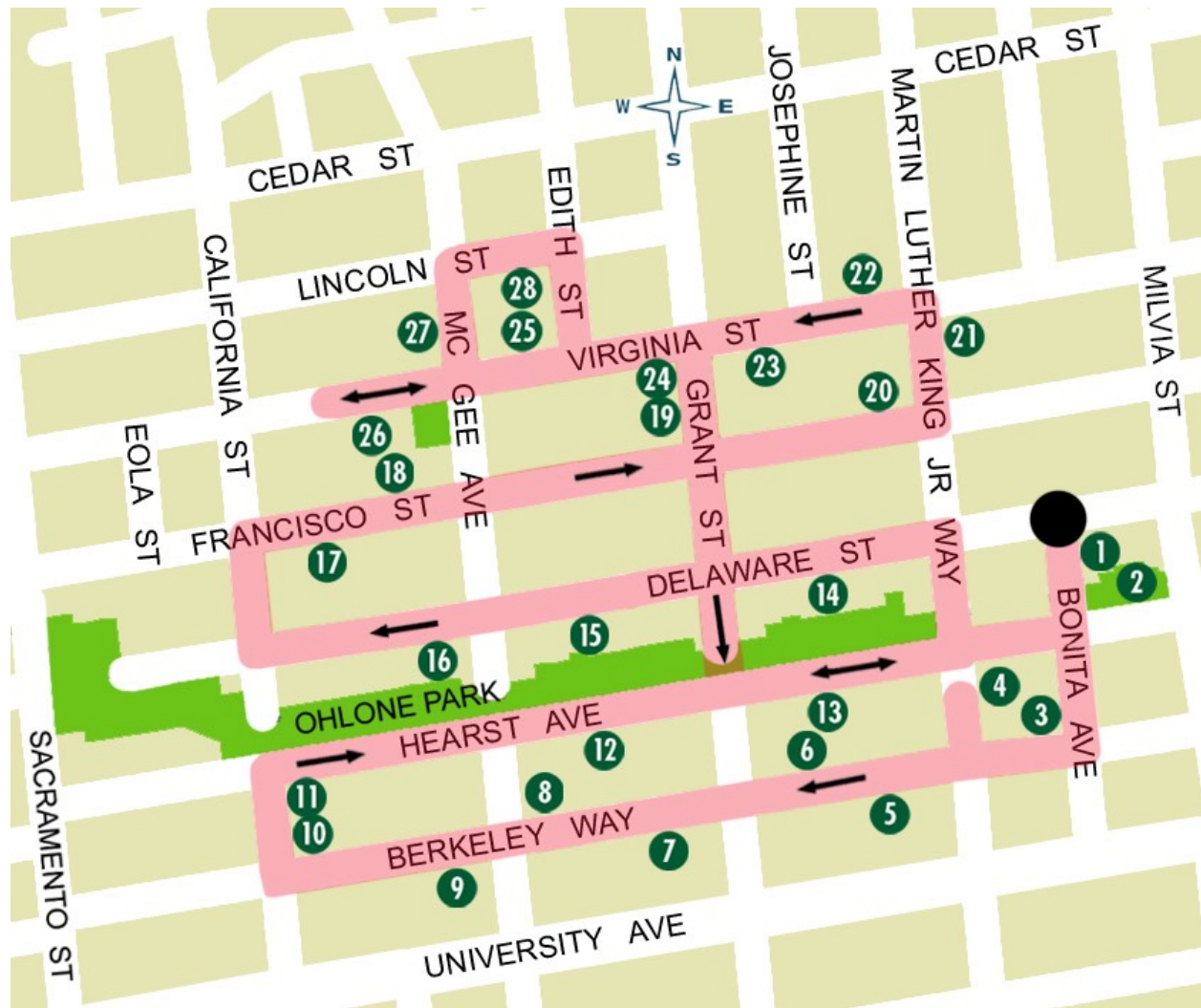
**Getting there:** Start from the southwest corner of Bonita Avenue and Delaware Street, only a few blocks walk from Downtown Berkeley BART. AC Transit buses also run nearby. Parking is available but scant on nearby streets; pay close attention to parking limit and street sweeping signs.

The area does not seem to have an accepted neighborhood name and is not well known despite its proximity to the downtown commercial district and position between two BART stations. Nevertheless, it is extremely pleasant for a stroll at almost any season. If you need to shorten the walk you can do so at the points where you return to Martin Luther King Jr. Way by going right to return to Hearst and crossing left at the signal to go back to the starting point on Bonita Avenue.

On the southeast corner at 1930 Delaware (1) is an early Victorian in the style called Italianate that was built in the 1870s but according to BAHA (Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association) was moved to this location around 1902. Notable features are the brackets under the eaves, the bracketed shelves over the windows, the rounded tops on many windows, the tiny room on top and the chimneys made of clinker brick--the one on the west side has an amazing window in the middle of it.

On the opposite southwest corner at 1802 Bonita is a Colonial Revival house from 1896 that has three floors with a Palladian window in the gable of the top floor on the Bonita side. It was renovated in 2018. The columns on the corner porch and dormer on the Delaware side feature carvings of acanthus leaves on top, an ornamental design going back at least to 5th century BC Greece. The roofline is unusual and fairly complex including an eyebrow dormer on the north side. Heading south on Bonita at





1806 Bonita is a Victorian cottage with numerous gables and bay windows and a distinctive ornamental element in the center of each gable.

Just before Hearst on the left is part of Ohlone Park; you can see looking left a 1995 mural, *The Ohlone Journey* (2), on the BART venting structure which features a Native American creation story and other historical and modern scenes about the Ohlone and their descendants on the various four sides. The main section of the park stretches for four blocks from Martin Luther King Jr Way west to Sacramento Street (with the BART running underneath).

To the right at this location is the North Berkeley Senior Center, renovated in 2019-2121, one of two in the city that is used not only for many senior activities but numerous city commission meetings. Across Hearst Avenue on the southwest corner is a brown shingle, multi-unit residential building from 1981, perhaps not great architecture but generally much more pleasant with its warm brown shingles and more in keeping with the neighborhood than the 1950s and 1960s concrete block apartments sometimes called dingbats.

Carefully cross Hearst (where the traffic does not have a stop) and note on the southeast corner at 1901 Bonita a Victorian house from 1891 that is now a duplex which has some colorful decorative features around the windows, fish scale shingles and a sunburst in the gable. The name on a plaque over the porch is Casa Bonita, referring to the street but also appropriate in that this means “pretty house”.

Continue south on Bonita and on the right side from mid-block to the corner is a landmarked building at 1912-18 Bonita called Bonita Hall, (3) designed in 1905 by William Black. The architect was from New England and thus the red brick American Colonial style that is not very common in Berkeley. The distinctive building has classic front door framing, shutters on the many of the lower arched window openings and a small cupola on the roof. It has seen many uses over the years: as a City of Berkeley stable, as a warehouse with lodge meetings and festivities in the second floor lodge hall, then a YWCA homeless shelter in the Depression, a furniture showroom, and more recently offices. The short lived but much loved Elephant Pharmacy had its administrative office in the section to the right. Several soaring Washingtonia Mexican fan palms are alongside the building on Bonita and another kind called queen palms are opposite on the southwest corner with Berkeley Way.

Opposite Bonita Hall to the east are two 1947 apartment buildings at 1915 and 1921 Bonita in a simple and severe Streamline Moderne style. At the southwest corner with Berkeley Way at 1920-22 Bonita is an 1895 Victorian house with complex roof and decorative details in the gables and on the porch.

Turn right on Berkeley Way with more of Bonita Hall in view and passing some Colonial Revival two story homes on the right. Then turn right at Martin Luther King Jr. Way and on the southeast corner of Hearst at 1905 MLK (4) is a 1904 Colonial Revival house with exuberant decoration over the curved and columned porch and over the window bays. There is an unusual double oval window in the center of the second floor and the front yard features two very large Canary Island palms.

Return to Berkeley Way. What looks like two buildings along MLK to the south is actually one project divided into two different styles to break up the massing. The addresses are 1888 Berkeley Way and 1988 MLK and construction was in 2009-10. The architect was Kirk Petersen and the nearer section



**1905 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way**

features a pleasant Berkeley brown shingle design with numerous bay windows, a historic look to the window design and massing that steps down in height towards the rear to respect the residential neighborhood behind. The other section in a traditional design in stucco has a rather jarring color scheme and the decorative panels would have been more engaging with some variety in the pattern. Nevertheless, it is a far better urban design and use of downtown space than the surface parking lot facing a nondescript strip mall that preceded it on this site.



**1830 Berkeley Way**

Cross MLK at the signal and head west on Berkeley Way. Just beyond the apartment complex at 1830 Berkeley Way (5) is a large Victorian villa that was built around 1889 but moved here in 1911. The original owner, George Pope, was the proprietor of a planing mill which would help explain the rich use of wood ornamentation. Actually some of the ornamental details are probably more recent as the house underwent a multi-year restoration around 2006-10. It features stained glass squares around many windows, a lively paint scheme, geometric decorative elements, an arched entryway and an unusual third floor dormer. In contrast next to it at 1826 Berkeley Way is a diminutive but charming cottage faced in stone done in 1927 by Carl Fox who along with his brothers did a number of storybook buildings in Berkeley. The rear portion has a similar design but not in stone.

Next at 1822 Berkeley Way is a good example of a two-story Craftsman with large brackets under the eaves; built in 1920 and restored around

2015, it is now a duplex. Farther down the block on the opposite side at 1811 Berkeley Way (6) is an 1898 Victorian with bracketed columns on the wide porch and curved framing under the gable. The 1898 date on real estate broker sites is suspect as it has the feel of an earlier farmhouse (cows in Berkeley?) The house was repainted in 2015.

Just before Grant Street redwoods are planted next to the sidewalk on the left side of the street, perhaps not the wisest choice for the narrow strip between curb and sidewalk as you can see.



When you cross Grant Street, named for US President Ulysses S. Grant, look at two apartment buildings going down Berkeley Way from the northwest corner that provide contrasting designs. The older corner building at 1753-59 Berkeley Way features simple but appealing decorative elements, a nicely framed entryway and windows and plantings along the sidewalk. The 1940 building next to it at 1743 Berkeley Way is also in stucco but presents garage doors and tacky windows to the street and has no clearly visible entrance. One can lament what happened to residential architecture after the 1930s as evidenced here and other places on this walk.

Farther along the block on the left at 1732 Berkeley Way (7) is an impressive three floor 1919 brown shingle house with a first floor set of windows that projects out slightly, a small prow-like planter box below the central second floor window and a jerkinhead roof gable. Across the street are summer-blooming red and white oleanders. Then on the right at 1727 Berkeley Way is a one story 1914 Brown Shingle style house that is very simple but the extending bracketed eaves and numerous gables give it character; there is a sympathetic later addition in the rear.

Approaching the next corner on the northeast at 1701 Berkeley Way (8) is another simple home in brown shingle built in 1917 that has the feeling of a rustic cabin. A magnificent large red flowering gum (*Corymbia ficifolia*) towers over the house from the adjoining yard on the right; it has clumps of brilliant flowers at many times of year. On the southeast corner (address is 1925 McGee) is a 1913 wood-sided bungalow with jerkinhead gables on the McGee side. In late winter McGee Avenue off to the right, along the east side, has pink plum flowers in bloom and more plums are on Berkeley Way and other streets of this walk.

In the next block on the left, 1636 Berkeley Way (9) from 1907 had a restoration and colorful paint job; note the ornate upper part of the front window. Just beyond it 1634 and 1632 Berkeley Way are two Craftsman bungalows from the early 1910s, both in the same design. At 1625 Berkeley Way on the right another Craftsman had a rear second floor addition that sought to mimic the front design with a similar gable, although it seems to overwhelm the historic part when seen from certain angles.



**Flowering gum near 1701 Berkeley Way**

At the end of the block on the northeast corner with California Street at 1601 Berkeley Way (10), the house was originally built in 1922, but renovated and raised up in 2006; at that time extensive landscaping was done including wooden fencing, stone retaining wall and plantings along the sidewalk which



**Landscaping at 1601 Berkeley Way**

provide a public amenity to sidewalk users rather than just a private garden. On the opposite northwest corner at 1912 California the 1906 house has a flaring roof design over the dormers and a corner rounded turret.

No need to walk there but down near the end of the next block on the right at 1505 Berkeley Way is a modest residence, part of a duplex, that was the home of public radio personality Alan Farley in 1971 when he shared

the residence with comedian Richard Pryor, who spent a brief period in Berkeley but one that led to a huge advance in his professional development.

Turn right (north) on California Street— enjoying the extensive landscaping— and on the latter part of the block on the right side is an apartment complex that seems to be mainly a row of garage doors. However, there is a central entry and stair as well as a stair and gate at the south end that go up to the apartments which are in a Spanish Mission Revival style (11) from 1929 with a long corridor set back from the front. This unusual design is best seen when approaching the building or from the other side of the street. The real surprise, however, is around the corner to the right on Hearst Avenue (actual address is 1600-1622 Hearst) where there is a charming landscaped pedestrian walk between the entryways for two rows of these apartments so the part along California is rather the “back” side of the units. Hearst is named for UC benefactor and regent Phoebe Apperson Hearst.

Continue east along Hearst toward the hills noting long and skinny Ohlone Park on the other side of the street; it features grassy lawns, playground equipment, basketball courts, a community garden, a dog play area and porta potties (the latter in this block). Houses were cleared along that side of Hearst to underground the BART train and only after long battles did community activists secure a commitment for a park. At the end of the block there is a PG&E electric substation on the right, somewhat incongruously in the middle of a residential neighborhood though the amount of substation structure has been greatly reduced leaving a vacant concrete area.



In the next block past McGee at 1716 and 1718 Hearst (12) are two brown shingle houses (built in 1908 and 1906, respectively). 1716 has a gambrel roof and an oval window near the entry while 1718 has a very high peaked roof and a rear addition visible on the east side. Along the street are camphor trees with bright green non-deciduous leaves that are fragrant when crushed.

Continuing past Grant, on the left is the popular dog park and at 1814 Hearst (13) is a large brown shingle Colonial Revival house with a columned porch and some leaded windows as well as giant conifers including a redwood and a deodar cedar on the right side. In the rear is an old building painted red that may have been a barn or stable considering the large openings on both the ground level and up above. In front of 1824 Hearst is a tall Canary Island palm.

At MLK Jr Way turn left and then turn left or west on Delaware. From 1836 to 1832 Delaware on the left and also 1827-21 Delaware on the right are a number of Colonial Revival homes, built around 1903-1906 in a simple two story format called American Foursquare. They feature asymmetrical facades, hipped roofs, classical columns and pilasters and bay windows. The Colonial Revival house at 1820 Delaware (14) is in a high peaked style in contrast to the squared off look of the other Colonial Revival houses on the block.

As you cross Grant look left for a row of ornamental plum trees that have pink flowers in late winter/ early spring. 1735 Delaware has a huge variety of potted succulents and cactus that are grown by Alex Riggs. Farther down the street the many-gabled brown shingle at 1728 Delaware has a beautiful wood and colored glass front door. Then at 1720 Delaware (15) is a large Queen Anne Victorian villa with fish scale shingles and an unusual balcony over the entry with



**Front door of 1728 Delaware**

arched framing; it has been divided up into apartments. The neighborhood has a number of post World War II apartment buildings that often lack good design amidst the older homes—a legacy of planning changes that were not carefully considered and later overturned by a citizens' initiative called the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance in 1973. Moreover, the following year the council enacted Berkeley's Landmark Preservation Ordinance. While it is easy to understand the concern about these often poorly built apartments, an unfortunate consequence of the NPO was further neighborhood segregation and reduction in affordable housing.



In the next block 1642 Delaware (16) is a very simple house, reportedly from 1900 though from the style it would seem to be older than that. This block features lots of wood board or shingle-sided Craftsman bungalows, stucco bungalows and a few altered Victorians. At the southeast corner with California at 1600-02 Delaware is a



**1642 Delaware**

building with red painted wood and brown shingles that is now apparently a duplex but originally there was probably a store front with living quarters above. A few of the old clerestory windows are still visible. Looking down Delaware (to the west) you can see a row of one story Colonial Revival homes built in the same style extending from the right or northwest corner at 1545,1543, and 1541 Delaware.

However, go right on California, which is a wider street than others in the neighborhood as at one time the Southern Pacific

commuter trains ran down the middle. Go right again one block later on Francisco Street. On the right there is an unpainted semi-open wooden fence at 1610-12 and 1614-16 Francisco (17) for a compound of homes. 1610 Francisco, a single story home in the rear, behind lots of foliage, was built in 1963 while 1612 with a second story residence over garages on the right was built in 1997. Both are in brown shingle as are 1614-16 on the left where in 1997 one unit was raised up to add another underneath. The units follow some elements of traditional design, showing a much more sensitive way to get higher density in a neighborhood than many of the concrete block apartments.

At 1626 Francisco is a striking 1964 apartment building that is very angular and brightly painted. Perhaps it is not great architecture but at least it has ample terraces for the units, avoids the dreadful blockiness of other buildings (such as 1632 next door) and is fronted by a large native oak tree. There are some jacaranda trees across the street with their ferny leaves and sprays of blue-purple flowers in summer. The California stucco bungalow at 1631 Francisco (18) has some delightful curves in the style of Mission Revival.

Just past McGee 1706 Francisco is a building set well back from street with parking in front and almost no windows facing the street, a multi-family residence built in 1969. While the front landscaping is nice, the concrete parking and virtually blank front wall do not contribute to neighborhood congeniality. At the end of the block go just a little

ways to the left on Grant Street to see 1714 Grant (19) with a jerkinhead gable in the roof and large multi-pane windows, a pleasant 1950 interpretation of the brown shingle style although it was later renovated.

Returning to Francisco at the northeast corner of Francisco and Grant are two pleasing duplexes in elongated American four-square with bay windows (the addresses are 1723 Grant/1801 Francisco and 1803-05 Francisco). Each duplex has the entry for one unit on the front and the other on the side. Continue going east on Francisco. 1822 Francisco on the right features two large 1963 apartment blocks that are reasonably well maintained but have a scale and cell-block look about them that is inappropriate for the neighborhood. The only open space on the lot is a central concrete drive for parking. At 1833 Francisco (20) a two story brown shingle house from 1913 was the teenage family home of Benny Green, a well-known jazz pianist and composer who graduated from Berkeley High in 1981.

When you reach MLK Jr. Way left look across to the northeast corner where 1721 MLK Jr Way has a corner turret and Colonial Revival features in a rather unique design but it is unclear whether some of these features are original or from later renovations. As you go left on MLK Jr Way and approach the next corner on the east side of the street at 1701 MLK Jr Way (21) is a beautiful three story mixed use building (with first floor shops and apartments above) in Italian Renaissance Revival style that is painted red. This type of mixed use building is totally appropriate for the street as part of a small commercial area that must have served a streetcar or commuter train stop. Sadly similar quality of design was not seen in the 1950s and 1960s apartment buildings.



**1701 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way**

The first floor shops include the studio of David Lance Goines, renowned graphic artist and writer famous for his posters and calligraphy (including numerous graphic works for Chez Panisse restaurant) as well as a nonfiction account of Berkeley's free speech movement.

Turn left on Virginia Street (named for Virginia Peralta Osuna, daughter of Spanish land grant holder Jose Domingo Peralta). Farther along at 2819 Virginia (22) on the right is a large 1910 Colonial Revival house that has been nicely restored. Then on the left at 1816 Virginia (23) is an 1893 Queen Anne Victorian with lavish ornamentation, some of which is actually in the later Colonial Revival style. There is a screen effect in the sections arching over the porch, Ionian column and pilasters,

elaborate designs in the gables and a small sculpted figurehead above the small window in the gable--is it Beethoven or some other historical figure? The building has been lovingly restored.

At the southeast corner with Grant 1800 Virginia (24) is a former store plus apartments building from 1914, later made into a dwelling, fairly common in the areas west of downtown. It has a corner entry with a projecting bay above it. In the next block 1741-43 Virginia (25) is a large 1902 brown shingle house divided into units with a giant wisteria all along the side facing the street so that the house can hardly be seen when the vine is in full leaf. Partly along this block and the next block the street is lined with sweetgum trees with their brilliant colors in late autumn.

1729 Virginia at the northeast corner with Edith is a 1903 Colonial Revival house but with uncommon design elements such as the manner of the columns framing the door



**1729 Virginia**

and some larger windows and the color scheme including brown painted wood for the walls and blue and yellow trim. There is also a narrow frieze with multi-colored dentils under the eaves of the flaring roof.

Farther along at the southwest corner of McGee and Virginia is Berkeley Totland featuring playground equipment, a sand area and a club house at the rear with a brightly colored mural; there are shade trees and tables for visitors. The property was purchased by the city in 1948 and planned and constructed with neighborhood

collaboration, and renovated in the 1990s and again in 2015. Virginia heading west and McGee Street to the left (south) both have sweetgums with great autumn color lasting for many weeks. Farther along on the left, 1624 Virginia (26) is a 1910 house with additions, a colorful paint scheme and a painted sunburst over the porch. There are also fantastical statues next to the driveway back near the house. 1616 Virginia is a 1900 Victorian cottage that looks fairly well preserved.

Return to McGee and turn left. 1636 McGee (27) is a 1900 house that seems to have had a brown shingle transformation, adding a second floor over the Victorian first floor. Next door 1634 McGee from 1910 has complex roof massing and an almost oriental look to the porch due to the curves in the stucco. On the other side at 1635 and 1633 McGee are two Victorians, the latter seeming to preserve more of its original 1900 features although it was raised up at some point. A California desert fan palm rises high between the two houses.



Continue to Lincoln and go right. In the next block between 1708 and 1712 Lincoln you can look down the driveway to see 1710 Lincoln (28), an intriguing 1893 Victorian done by John Paul Moran, a former English ship's carpenter, as his own house. It has unusual massing and lots of ornamentation as well as a cupola on top where he could view ships on the bay.

At Edith turn right to see the sweetgum trees and other numerous plants and shrubs that make the narrow street very verdant and shady. A paperbark tree (*Melaleuca linariifolia*) near the end of the block on the left is covered with sprays of white flowers in early summer. Its fibrous spongy bark gives the tree its common name. Go left at Virginia and right at Grant. You can follow this to Hearst and go left, crossing MLK Jr Way at the signal and a left at Bonita which will take you back to the starting point at Delaware.



**1710 Lincoln**

## Walk 33

# Shasta to the Upper Campus

**Overview:** Due partly to the steep terrain this was one of the last areas developed in Berkeley and thus has a higher ratio of mid-century modern residences than most of the other areas of the city. The hillside had been extensively planted as a eucalyptus plantation. It was also built out without sidewalks on curving up and down streets. It does offer some good views and a variety of home styles.

**Highlights:**

- \* Some panoramic views, especially from the edge of the upper UC campus
- \* A variety of homes set amidst wooded terrain
- \* A reasonably good exercise walk with most of the streets not heavily trafficked

**Distance:** 3.2 miles

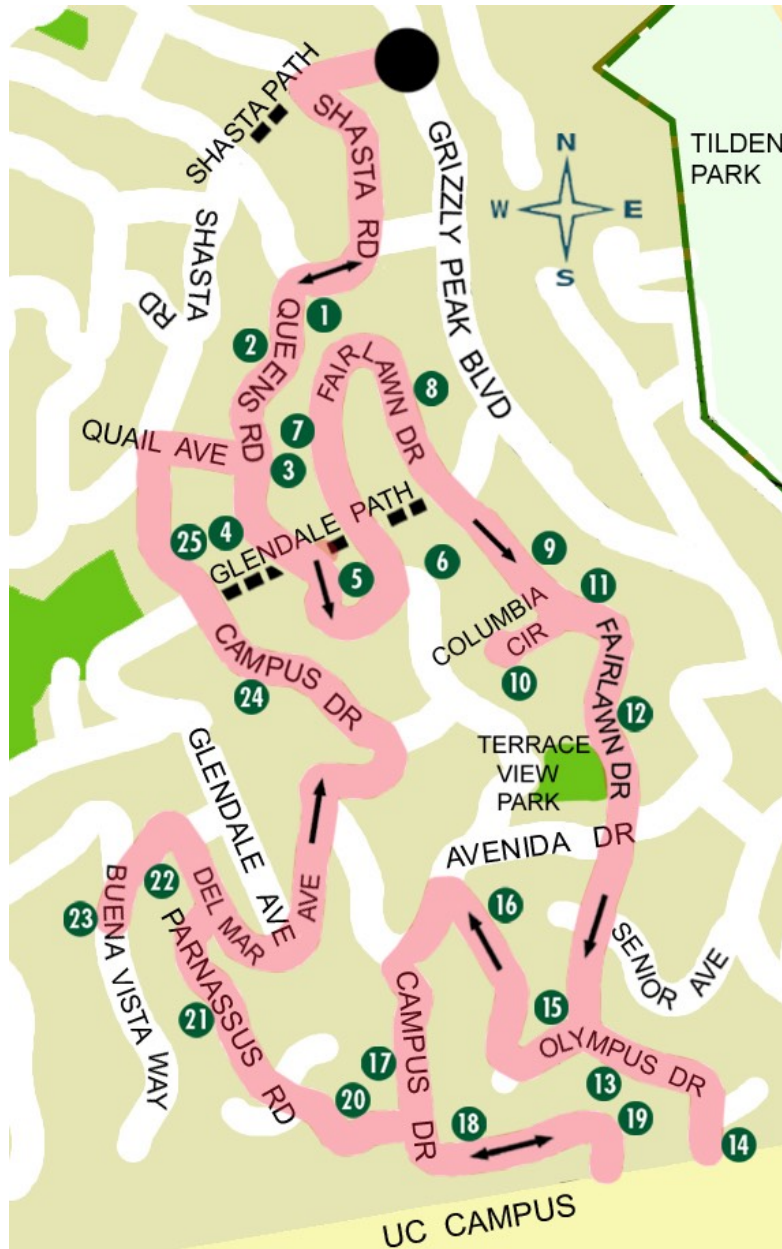
**Elevation Gain:** 650 feet

**Getting there:** Start at the northwest corner of Shasta Road and Grizzly Peak Boulevard. Shasta jogs here at Grizzly Peak so you want the segment that goes downhill to the west which is farther south on Grizzly Peak from the segment heading east (where there are signs pointing to Tilden Park). There is a nearby stop of the AC Transit Line 65 or you can park on the street including Grizzly Peak or heading down Shasta and right on Miller Avenue.

There are essentially no sidewalks in this area. Most of the streets you will walk on are pretty quiet, but some of them, particularly Shasta, get a fair amount of traffic that tends to be in too much of a hurry for the narrow winding streets so be alert for cars and stay as far to the side as possible. As Kathy Morey says in her Hawaiian trail guides, just assume that the drivers may be blind, deaf and insane.

Most of the houses in this area are post World War II and it was developed in a rather haphazard fashion on a hillside that had been heavily planted in blue gum eucalyptus, not a good tree to have around when there are fires. These are some of the steepest slopes in Berkeley for home building. The houses tend to be mainly wood sided with some stucco and in a variety of styles from a few more traditional types to many mid-twentieth century modern and some recent construction as well. However, the variety and the absence of cookie cutter tract houses is one of the things that makes this walk appealing.

In any case descend on Shasta, bearing left as you pass Miller Avenue and looking up to the left to see the houses high above Grizzly Peak on a very steep slope. The right side tends to have a bit more shoulder for walking. You will eventually come to the



only stretch of sidewalk you will see on the walk as you pass around a building at 2931 Shasta that was originally the fire station for this area; however, when the station moved it was renovated to become a home.

Carefully cross the street to the left to go on Queens Road. 1201 Queens (1) on the southeast corner is a pleasant Mediterranean style home with lush gardens. 1230 Quenns (2) was supposedly at one time the abode of Timothy Leary, a psychologist and writer best known for advocating the exploration of the therapeutic potential of psychedelic drugs under controlled conditions. He led a very colorful life and was often arrested. The Leary family no longer lives there and the house has been much renovated so please do not disturb the occupants. When you get to the intersection



with Quail Avenue cross Quail very carefully as cars tend to come from behind down Queens and turn very fast onto Quail.

Just opposite Quail, 1263 Queens (3) on the left is a version of storybook style from 1927 with a cute turret entrance, an old style wooden door, wavy siding and rough hewn stones set in the stucco. Farther along at 1286 Queens (4) on the right is one of the newer houses, from 2009, in corrugated metal siding and lots of angles for the industrial look that has been popular with some designers seeking to be hip. By contrast, after a steep uphill section at 1345 Queens (5) is a 1936 American Colonial style house with classically framed entrance and window shutters, unusual for this area. The first floor has horizontal board siding but the second floor has vertical board and batten (narrow boards laid over the grooves of the wider boards).

You can see here some of the steep slopes that would seem to be a concern in case of earthquakes or heavy rains. Many property owners have done brush clearance to reduce fire danger. This street is typical of the walk today in that it follows an up and down pattern rather than slavishly following contours as the latter would be too complex.

At the intersection with Fairlawn Drive up ahead at 1355 Queens (6) is a large house from 1936 with unpainted wood siding, a brick chimney, dormer windows and another unit over the garage which is also done in traditional style with a steep roof and multi-paned windows. From here go left on Fairlawn noting on the left houses in different styles on a very steep slope. Opposite 13 Fairlawn is the Glendale path on the right; there is a sign about the geology next to a rock outcrop a bit up the steps but it may be unreadable due to weathering. As you proceed on Fairlawn, there is another sizable rock outcrop on the right opposite 17 Fairlawn.

Occasional views to the west open up along the route such as at 33 Fairlawn (7).

Fairlawn makes a u-turn to the right to head back south at a higher level than the initial section. The house at 83 Fairlawn (8) from 1942 has decks on various levels and a steeply terraced front garden. There is another view looking across the street to the west. For some residences on the downhill side only the garage is at street level and the house is mostly hidden down the



**83 Fairlawn**

steep slope. There are a couple of fairly large redwood trees across from the intersection with Arcade Avenue where you also find the upper end of Glendale path.

At 141 Fairlawn (9), mostly hidden behind a nondescript wooden garage and numerous trees is a cube shaped 2004 residence whose two floor front room facade is all glass. An interior stairway leading up to the loft level is also visible but you have to squint through the trees to see this unique house designed by neo-primitive architect Andrew Batey.

Number 152 Fairlawn on the right is a more traditional house from 1928, one of the older residences in the neighborhood, with a giant sequoia and deodar cedar in front and a large collection of large and very small unused cars that have been there for many years including more you will see in the side yard as you turn right on Columbia Circle.

On the right side at number 22 Columbia is a modern 1980 home with some traditional design elements in wood and stucco that has a pleasant ambiance. One Columbia from 1929 behind a fence and bamboo hedge has a high peaked roof, half-



**17 Columbia Circle**

timbering and window shutters while 17 Columbia (10) built in 1948 across from it has vertical projections with slanting roofs over the entryway and upper floor. Return to Fairlawn and continue to the right going more or less south.

157 Fairlawn opposite Columbia is a a good example of mid-century modern architecture, but it also has Japanese sensibility such as the stone lantern, the chain coming down from gutter and a big Japanese maple in front. It was designed by

Berkeley architect Gerald McCue as his own home in 1955.

There are a couple of large sweet gum trees on the left at 195 Fairlawn with brilliant autumn colors around November/December. Then on the right is Terrace View Park which has playgrounds, a ball court, and a picnic area on descending terraces but also lots of trees so there is little view from the upper terraces. Park renovation was carried out in 2015.



On the left between 215 and 221 Fairlawn (12) is a terraced mini garden with turtle sculpture and a tiny water feature (when running); both houses have large wisteria or other vines. Carefully cross Avenida Drive where cross traffic does not have a stop. On the left a steep driveway up to 98 and 100 Avenida is lined with redwood trees. Proceed straight ahead to the top of the rise and cross Senior Avenue to continue on Fairlawn.

After a steep descent to the end of Fairlawn go left on Olympus Avenue where there is a “No Outlet” sign; the street as well as Parnassus, which we encounter later, are named for the famous mountains in Greece. There are many California native live oaks in this area amidst the non-native trees such as in the open area to the left.

1536 Olympus (13) has a wood-framed gate with an intriguing pattern in the central metal sheet. Nest door at 1544 Olympus is a 1969 Mediterranean/contemporary style orange house with some attractive features such as the tile roof, the large wooden brackets and beam on the garage and some of the windows.



**Gate at 1536 Olympus**

After passing 1580 Olympus at the end of of the street, step beyond the gate into the upper campus of UC for a spectacular view, weather

permitting. Lawrence Hall is up to the left (easily reached via the path and through the parking area) while the UC campus and downtown Berkeley are down to the right; San Francisco, Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Bridge, Angel Island and the Marin peninsula may be visible across the Bay. There are some paths here, but they do not go all the way down to the main campus due to the restricted area around the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories which is partially visible downhill beyond a grove of tall eucalyptus.

Since the path is steep and eroded, return to Olympus noting the modern, rather delicate iron fence at 1580 Olympus; the house is a rambling but appealing 1994 modern/traditional style residence that must have fine views. Previously the site had a stable for the house opposite uphill from it so the horses were the ones to enjoy the views.

Opposite 1580 on the right (14) the big 1950 house—the address is 2 Wilson Circle—was the home of Wallace (Wally) and Marion Johnson. Wally was mayor of Berkeley from 1963-71, during the period of civic tumult. A civil engineer, he tenaciously led the



city along with others such as Mabel Howard in its long campaign to force BART to underground its tracks through Berkeley ultimately 83% of voters agreed to tax themselves more to pay the difference compared to the cost of elevated tracks. Earlier in life he founded Up-Right Scaffold, a pioneer in portable aluminum scaffolding.

Backtrack on Olympus and bear left downhill to remain on Olympus at the intersection with Fairlawn. At the intersection 1515 Olympus (15) is a 1952 house in wood built in an L-shape around a grand old oak tree with a pleasing small garden. 1510 Olympus a little farther down on the opposite side is a traditional style 1938 house with double gables, diamond-paned windows and irregular roof shingles. Continue on Olympus bearing right past the little cul-de-sac called Harding Circle.

Farther along 1463 Olympus (16) is a large Mediterranean style house from 1928 in a bright color that stands out against the many unpainted wood homes along the walk as typified by the brown shingle house to the right at 1467 Olympus. Farther along at 1451 Olympus is another bright 3-story 1928 Mediterranean style house which ascends the slope in stepped fashion.

Go left downhill on Avenida Drive where you need to watch for traffic and then left on Campus. Along the way the brown shingle at 1498 Campus (17) has a nice sculpture in the gate. Later, after going down again, bear left to stay on Campus at the intersection with Parnassus Road where there is another “No Outlet” sign. Most of the houses on this stretch are in unpainted wood board siding or shingles. On the left at 1545 Campus (18) is a somewhat early modern 1957 house that sits partly on a curving front masonry wall that helps support it over the open garage while a balcony goes all along two sides.



**1585 Campus**

Farther along 1585 Campus (19) from 1991 is in brown shingle with pointy angular features including a prow-like deck. Next to it at 1589 Campus is a 1996 renovation of a 1965 design that was a vertical box; the altered house is bigger but rather elegant with tall windows, wood shingles and vari-colored stone on the retaining walls. A tall sycamore tree is in front with peeling multi-colored bark and large, maple-like leaves. Across from that at the end of the street 1590 Campus is a 1963 house by Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, Whitaker that has a bridge to the front door. You

can see the hillside part of the house with various decks if you step out on either the

lower or upper path at the end of the street and you can also enjoy another panoramic view from the path.

Return along Campus and this time go left on Parnassus Road. At 95 Parnassus (20) is an example of the Streamline Modern style with curving upper terrace from 1935 by John Dimwiddie, one of the earlier houses in the area. Across from it is a

1934 house at 96 Parnassus that looks like it has been transplanted from the English countryside to the Berkeley Hills. The traditional stylistic features include the lower wall in red brick, steep roof slopes, half timbering (including some unusual designs), a tower feature, and dormers. There are also zany patterns in the way the brick is laid.



**95 Parnassus**

The address is a little confusing in that there is also 98 Parnassus which refers to a 1999 house behind the older house but not readily visible from the street.

Descend and stay on Parnassus passing West and East Parnassus Courts as you go uphill again. 40 Parnassus (21) is a Mediterranean/contemporary house designed by David Wilson with a grand view to the west. There is a large gray rock outcrop opposite 30 Parnassus with a house and deck on top (the address is 33 Parnassus). At 23 Parnassus the section of the house with garage that thrusts up toward the street has living quarters above the garage featuring lots of windows that give it a bright ambiance.

Farther along go left down Del Mar Avenue, noting at 46 Del Mar a house with a very tall window made up of glass blocks tinted in various colors; the well-tended front garden has a water feature which may or may not be running. Then around the sharp curve at 18 Del Mar (22) is a striking, basically new 2011 house with a raking slope to the roof and large windows, decks, built in planter boxes and beautiful wood siding designed as his family home by architect John Quiter. A 1933 home on the site was recycled in the new construction which met the sustainable building standards of LEED Platinum.

At Buena Vista Way go just a little to the left to see 3050 Buena Vista (23) a pleasing 1930 house in brown wood with a varied roofline; is is rather like a rustic retreat.



Across from that up the hill at 3049 Buena Vista is a 1952 home with some rough stone siding which is fairly unusual for Berkeley.

If you are really ambitious you can descend further to the left on Buena Vista to see a number of contemporary style homes but in any case return the way you came on Buena Vista and go right back up Del Mar, this time passing Parnassus to continue up and



**Houses high above Campus Drive**

down. Be on the right side to carefully pass the blind T-intersection with Glendale Avenue where cars come around the corners very fast; continue uphill to an intersection with Campus Drive that comes down from the right. Continue straight ahead onto the curving downhill street which is now Campus Drive. As you go downhill and around another curve you can look up ahead and to the right to see houses high up on the steep slope.

Farther along at 1330 Campus (24) on the downhill side is a modest house that has a more traditional design

with an attractive arched entryway; it is from 1938 and not at all characteristic of this neighborhood but rather quaint. It is best to keep on the right side before another intersection with Glendale Avenue as cars tend to take the corner very fast. At 1285-87 Campus is a 2007 house with numerous decks and more traditional window and door designs that seems to have two units from the addresses given and the two mailboxes. 1275 Campus from 1927 has double front facing gables and some traditional design elements such as half-timbering, multi-pane windows and the wooden balcony and deck railings.

At Quail Avenue turn up to the right, mindful that this stretch gets a fair amount of traffic. However, in the right near the white wood house is a more tranquil spot with a bench. There may be an interesting sign or placard in front though they seem to vary over time. After your rest go left on Queens to Shasta and then carefully right up Shasta to the starting point.