

Winter 2009

Volume 27, Number 1
COPYRIGHT 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

Phillip Dick in Berkeley.....	1
Oral History News	1
Letter from the Presidents.....	2
Thank You	2
In Memoriam.....	2
Berkeley Police Bike Patrol.....	4
Photo Contest.....	6
Events at the Center.....	8
Calendar of Events	8

Do Androids Dream in Berkeley

Part 2 - Continuing the Story of Philip K. Dick's Life in Berkeley

By Maureen Foster

UC Berkeley - briefly

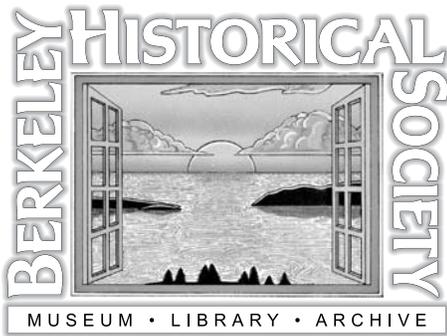
In 1948 Philip K. Dick married Jeanette Marlin, a customer he met at the music store, but the union was short-lived and, according to biographer Lawrence Sutin, Phil rarely mentioned her. Phil moved to an attic apartment at 1931 Dwight Way in 1949 and, in the fall, enrolled at UC Berkeley, where he planned to major in philosophy, taking classes in zoology and history as well. But his college career lasted only two months. Participation in ROTC was mandatory at the time, and this posed a problem for Phil.

His third wife Tessa Busby recalled, "they had to march with their M-1's. But he would march with a broom because he didn't want to carry a gun and they told him he couldn't do that. Well, the following week, they were learning how to take the M-1 apart and put it back together, but somehow, accidentally, Phil dropped the firing pin into the wrong place and the gun was useless and could never be fired again. So he marched with the broken gun, but he got an F in ROTC, or they kicked him out...he never told the story the same way twice." Phil fictionalized the episode in his novel *Radio Free Albemuth*.

Various sources offer differing interpretations of Phil's departure from the UC and the circumstances that led to it, probably because, as Tessa recalled, he varied the stories himself. He also teased his readers into a game of separating his fiction from his autobiography, which yet again varied from "some of the lies he presents as his life, and he's very careful to obscure the difference," commented science fiction author Thomas M. Disch. "He wants to make this a riddle," said Disch; he was a "con artist...who expected his audience to appreciate his performances." Biographer Emmanuel Carrere's take on Phil's UC episode is that "several days after after he had signed up for a course on *Sturm und Drang* and the philosophy of David Hume, a severe panic attack put an end to his academic career."



But, in a recent interview, Paul Williams, editor of the Philip K. Dick Society Newsletter and longtime friend of the author, said that Phil's problems at UC Berkeley "were clearly both school and ROTC related." Symptoms of vertigo and agoraphobia in the classroom continued to plague him



The History Center is located in the
Veterans Memorial Building
1931 Center St., Berkeley, CA 94701
 Mailing Address: **PO Box 1190**
Berkeley, CA 94701 510 848 0181

Margot Lind
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dale Smith
 DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Board of Directors

- | | |
|--|---|
| Margot Lind
CO-PRESIDENT | Carl Wikander
CO-PRESIDENT |
| Carole Bennett-Simmons
VICE PRESIDENT | Judy Kennedy
SECRETARY |
| Phil Gale
TREASURER | John Aronovici
AnaLuisa Coplan
PAST CO-PRESIDENT |
| Ken Cardwell
Tom Edwards
Steven Finacom
Ed Hery | Greta Olsen
Dale Smith
stefen
Allen Stross |

Thank You

Eunice Childs for her contribution to the L.L. Stein Endowment Fund

Thornwall Properties, Inc., Hank Abraham, Bruce Foidman and Allen Kropp for their Business Membership of \$100

Howard & Estelle Bern for their \$75 membership

Daniella Thompson, Annelise Armstrong, Steve Greenberg & Liz Vainhager, Jeremy Knight & Barbara Adair, Richard C. Otter and Fred & Judy Porta for their Contributing Memberships of \$50.

during this period, but Phil's own psyche may have played the biggest role. Williams's 1986 book *Only Apparently Real* expands upon lengthy interviews he conducted with Phil for *Rolling Stone*. "I began to get terribly frightened and anxious and I didn't know why,"

Phil told Williams in 1974. "Fortunately I listened to my unconscious because it was too strong to be denied...It drove me out of the cloistered realms where I would have been cut off from the broader, truer world, and drove me into the real world. It drove me into a job, and marriage, and a career in writing." But he also admitted, "I am very defensive about all of this still, because I didn't finish college."

In the winter of 1949 Phil was dividing his work between Herb Hollis's two music stores in Berkeley, and it was at Art Music [2328 Telegraph Avenue] that he met Kleo Apostolides. He spotted her browsing through Italian opera, an interest she had in common with Phil. In June 1950, at Oakland City Hall, they were married.

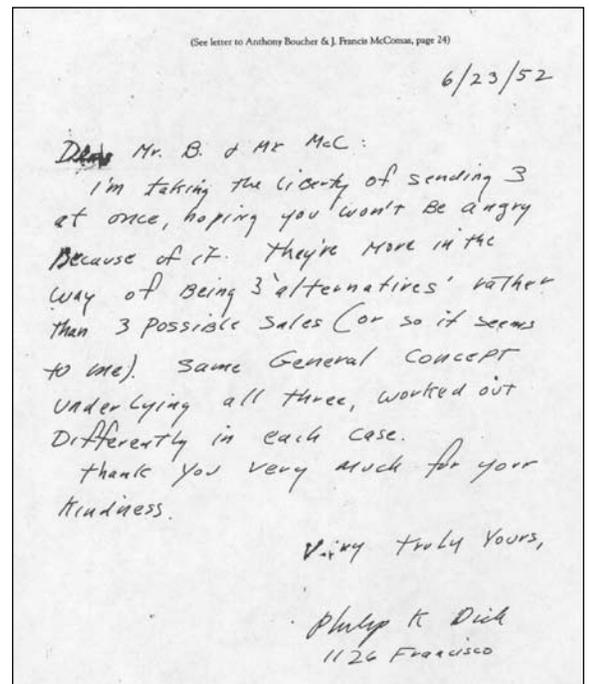
They moved into the house at 1126 Francisco Street that Phil had recently bought. "The roof leaked and the paint was peeling off the walls," writes Carrere. "Whenever it rained, they had to put pans everywhere...the difficulties didn't seem to faze them, though...Kleo was determined to resist anything resembling a bourgeois lifestyle. A stalwart foot soldier of local radicalism, Kleo wore jeans and horn-rimmed glasses, and sang the songs of the Spanish Civil War that the members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade had sung as they marched on Madrid."

A Distinguished Mentor

While Kleo worked and attended UC Berkeley, Phil, with her financial, editorial, and moral support, began writing in earnest. "He was too reclusive to join a critique group," Kleo's daughter Anne Mini English comments, "so she routinely took his early short stories (and hers) to a well-known writers' group in Berkeley, jotted down the feedback, and carried it back to Phillip so he could revise."

The process of submitting the stories was a team effort that was both streamlined and economical. "They stuffed each of these short stories into a grey Manila envelope with a second envelope folded up inside as an SASE, and sent them off to any magazine that had evinced even the remotest interest in science fiction or fantasy."

A vast volume of submissions insured an avalanche of rejections, with Kleo's recollection of the seven-



teen manuscripts spilling out of the mailbox onto the front porch. But the young couple was tenacious. The stories they'd sent, as Anne describes it, "landed once again in

STRANGE ADVENTURES ON OTHER WORLDS—
PLANET
stories



BEYOND LIES THE WUB
By PHILIP K. DICK

their mailbox with the accuracy of a well-flung boomerang,” and would be promptly submitted elsewhere. “To minimize retyping, they would iron pages that had gotten bent in the mail, slip the manuscript into a fresh envelope, and send it to the next prospective publisher.”

Yet Phil’s first sale was to come not from one of hundreds of unsolicited submissions, but from a customer he met at Art Music. Berkeley resident Anthony Boucher was a fellow opera enthusiast, collector, and host of an opera program on radio station KPFK. He was also an eclectic literary figure both locally and nationally. Boucher sold his first short story to *Weird Tales* at the age of sixteen, attended USC, and earned an M.A. at UC Berkeley. He translated works to English from five languages, and translated Jorge Luis Borges decades before his writing was well-known outside of Argentina. (An interesting connection is that author Ursula K. Le Guin was to later refer to Dick as “our own home-grown Borges.”)

Boucher wrote seven mystery novels, hundreds of radio plays including Sherlock Holmes dramas, and edited numerous anthologies. Writing criticism for the San Francisco

Chronicle and other major newspapers, he was, commented William F. Nolan, “recognized as the nation’s foremost authority on crime fiction, without question the most influential, as well as the most popular, mystery critic of his period.”

Fortunately for Phil, Tony Boucher was also the co-founder/editor (with J. Francis McComas) of the Magazine *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, and a dedicated mentor, coach, and inspiration for new writers. It was the informal writers’ group he held in his house at 2643 Dana Street where Kleo came to seek feedback and editorial guidance that she then relayed to Phil. The sessions were also attended by Phil’s mother Dorothy, who was also writing fiction. Phil told interviewer Joe Vitale, “My mother was an editor...but her ambition was to write and sell stories and novels. It was from her that I got the idea that writing was a very important thing.”

Beyond Lies the Wub

In November 1951 Boucher and McComas bought Phil’s story *Roog* for publication in *Fantasy and Science Fiction*. In June Phil sent them three more stories as possible “alternatives.” *Roog* was to have the distinction of being his very first sale, but as it happened, the story, *Beyond Lies the Wub*, that he subsequently sold to *Planet Stories* appeared first in July 1952.

Phil and Kleo’s story-submitting enterprise was in high gear - write a story, send it out, get it back, iron it and resubmit in a fresh envelope - and soon acceptances began to snowball. In 1953 alone, thirty of his stories were published, seven in a single month, all on the corner store magazine racks at the same time. At the end of 1954, commented Isa, Phil’s daughter with his fourth wife Nancy Hackett, “he had published sixty-two stories, while he had been a writer for only three years.”

Beyond Lies the Wub tells the tale of a spaceship visiting Mars and a crewmember named Peterson, who purchases from a Martian an oversized and shaggy creature known as a Wub. On the ship’s journey Peterson discovers the Wub’s surprising intelligence as the pair embark on long conversations about the journeys of *Odysseus*. Unfortunately another crew member, Franco, is more interested in the Wub’s culinary potential, and cooks and eats it. After that, Franco continues the conversation that, unbeknownst to him, the Wub had been having with Peterson.

Of his tale of anthropocentrism Phil wrote, “the idea I wanted to get down on paper had to do with the definition of ‘human.’ The dramatic way I trapped the idea was to present ourselves, the literal humans, and then an alien life form that exhibits the deeper traits that I associate with humanity...an organism that is human in terms of its soul.” He also commented, “Jack O’Sullivan, an editor of *Planet*, wrote to tell me that in his opinion it was a very fine little story - whereupon he paid me something like fifteen dollars. It was my introduction to pulp payment rates.”

More stories appeared throughout the 1950s and 60s in magazines with spectacular, bizarre covers and names like *Fantastic Universe*, *Galaxy*, *Orbit*, *Amazing*, *If*, and *Worlds of Tomorrow*. Phil shared these pages with hundreds of others, including Isaac Asimov, Philip Jose Farmer, Poul Anderson, Arthur C. Clarke, and Richard Matheson, and the relatively rare women in the field, such as Judith Merrill and Evelyn Goldstein.

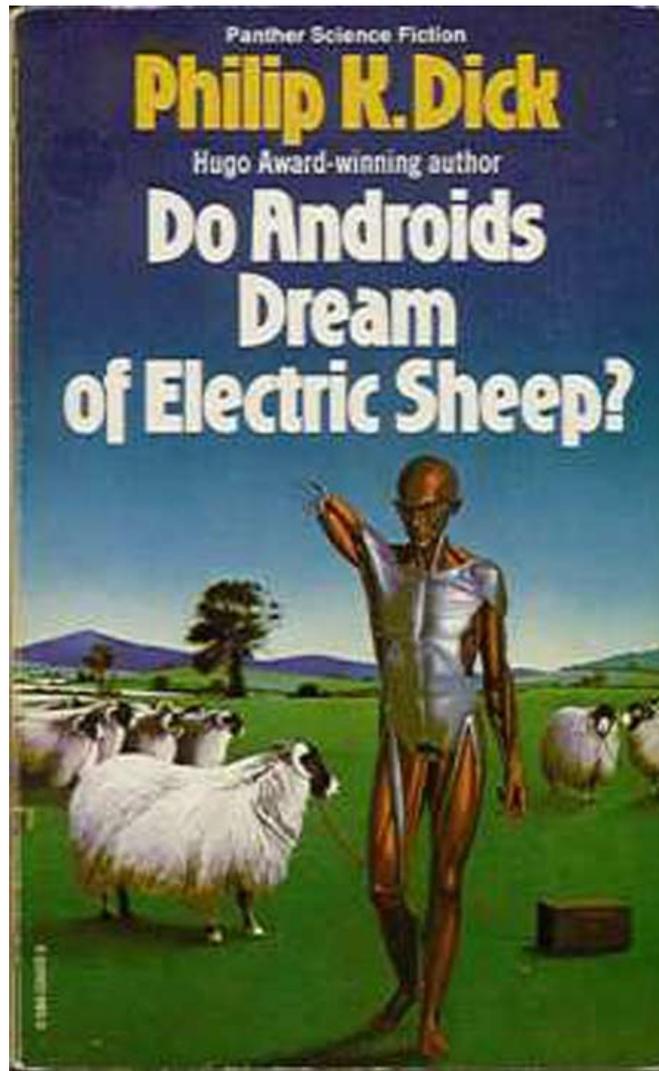
“In a blaze of Faust-like fire,” Phil wrote, “I abruptly quit my job at the record shop, forgot my career in records, and began to write all the time.” In a 1974 interview he told Paul Williams, “I went to my first convention and they said, ‘you ought to write novels...you’ll never get any-

where writing stories...and I realized I would have to write a novel...I still wasn't able to buy an automobile, that's how poor I was selling seven stories simultaneously. So I looked for an idea, and I found that in games theory." The resulting novel was *Solar Lottery*, which was bought by Don Wollheim at Ace Books and published as half of a paperback "Ace Double" in 1955.

In quick succession six more of his science fiction novels were issued by Ace by the time Phil and Kleo moved from Berkeley to Point Reyes in 1958. Among them were *Eye In The Sky* (1957) whose protagonist, an engineer named Josh Hamilton, discovers that a radiation incident has left him and his friends with the ability recreate the world everyone lives in - according to the reality in their own minds.

The Man Who Japed (1956) is set in a 2114 post-apocalyptic dystopia of lies, surveillance and censorship. Nothing can grow in the "surface of ash" that is the detritus of the prewar world, "a mixture of organic and inorganic compounds. A fusion of people and their possessions into a common gray-black blur." Protagonist Allen Purcell's acts of rebellion against the government include "japing" or desecrating a revered statue, and stomping on a "juvenile", the ubiquitous eighteen-inch robotic informers that scuttle close to the floor taping people's lives. Both these novels explore themes that Phil pursued in one form or another throughout his life and work: "what is human?" and "what is real?"

During his years on Francisco Street in Berkeley, Phil also wrote eight mainstream or non-science fiction novels that were not accepted at the time, but which have since been published, most recently *Voices From the Street* in 2007. He was a prolific writer throughout the 1960's and 1970's, winning a Hugo



Award in 1963 for his novel *The Man in the High Castle*, and a John W. Campbell award in 1975 for *Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said*. His 1977 book *A Scanner Darkly*, possibly his most autobiographical work, fuses a nightmarish present-day tale of technology, surveillance and paranoia with a reflection upon Phil's own extended period of methamphetamine abuse.

Dick lived in Southern California, where *Scanner* is set, during the last decade of his life. At the time of his death from a stroke in 1982, only two months before the release of *Blade Runner*, Phil was at work on a book called *The Owl in Daylight*. Along with an exploration of his years in the culture of Berkeley, ideas from the book will be incorporated in a film biography of his life scheduled for release in 2009.

A Cultural Afterlife

The Bancroft Library of UC Berkeley houses a Philip K. Dick archive assembled by Acquisitions Head, D. Steven Black. A lifelong fan, Black acknowledges that the author's brilliance was less appreciated during his lifetime than that of fellow science fiction writers, such as Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov, because their work "reflected an optimistic, can-do vision." Dick's view of society, refracted through science fiction, was more sardonic, even jaundiced, portraying the 20th century as a protodystopia.

But in recent decades, commented Black, "the world came to seem more in line

with his vision", generating, after his death, what Black calls "a rich cultural afterlife." The archive contains a selection of his science fiction and mainstream novels, a five-volume set of the author's collected letters, an almost complete collection of magazine short stories, and the complete set of Philip K. Dick Society Newsletters from the 1980s and 90s under editor Paul Williams, all of which are available to the public for viewing on the premises.

Dick's novels regularly appear on required reading lists for courses at UC Berkeley. Last year Professor Walter Freeman asked his class to read *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* for a discussion on brainwashing in his Molecular & Cell Biology freshman seminar.

An Update to the Story of James McGee from the Winter 2007 Newsletter

After his death, two other successful films were based on Dick's work. *Total Recall* was based on the short story *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale* and *Minority Report* was based on the novel of the same name.

"His genius weds a core of memorable characters to paradoxical plots rich with philosophical inquiry," wrote John Boonstra, who interviewed Phil shortly before his death. "But a brief description can't explain how entertaining this eclectic mix invariably proves to be."

In the summer of 2007 the Berkeley Public Library featured Phil's work, along with an appreciation and commentary, in its outside display case on Kittredge Street. James Foley, who created the display, first became interested in Dick's work when his father gave him a copy of *The Man in the High Castle*. "I went on to read another dozen or so of his books," says Foley. "The reason I was so drawn to Philip K Dick's works was that his novels asked important philosophical and theological questions. What can we know? What is reality? What is God? When reading one of his novels you get the sense that you're never really on solid ground, that the floor could be swept out from under you at any moment to reveal a completely transformed version of reality."

A tour of Berkeley's used bookstores will often yield one of Dick's paperbacks from the 1960's and 1970's, and magazines like *Amazing* containing one of his stories occasionally turn up at Half Price Books. A glass case on the counter at science fiction and fantasy book shop, Another Change of Hobbit, on Shattuck, houses a note from the author that Phil gave the store after he cancelled a scheduled appearance:

I promise you an autograph party
Philip K. Dick

James McGee, an early Berkeley developer, amassed property holdings of nearly 24 square blocks. His wife Catherine died in 1874 and he died in 1899. James's estate upon his death was estimated to be worth \$100,000 in 1899 money. His properties stretched from California Street to MLK, and Addison to Dwight Way. Everything was left to his daughters Catherine and Mary Ann, but they ended up dying quite poor.

Recently Irene A. Mahan, a distant cousin of the McGee's, recently contacted BHS and the McGee Neighborhood Association with interesting details regarding the landholdings of James McGee.

Irene A. Mahan reports that, after James McGee died, an attorney friend of his, who was considerably younger than James, "managed" the daughters' affairs. In the late 1930's her great aunt and uncle, Gus and Alice (Rooney) Wendt found that the lawyer had been swindling the sisters. He would find a "buyer" for a piece of land, offer a "good price" and sell it for them. It turned out that he was buying much of the land himself and then re-selling it for three times the price

the sisters were given. Some land he kept for himself and took a cut of the price for the rest.

By the time Gus Wendt, (who was a successful builder in the Oakland area) discovered this, all the property and everything else was gone, including furniture and jewelry. What was done was legal, but unethical. Gus tried to do something about it, but to no avail.

Another great uncle, Clem Rooney, who remembered the sisters, said that they never got married because James would never allow anyone to court them because he was afraid suitors would only be after his money. Clem told a story that around 1918, the sisters were due for a visit in Sacramento. He and his brothers had a friend who fancied himself a ladies' man. When he heard that the cousins were visiting, he was very interesting in making their acquaintance. The Rooney boys really played them up as being single and wealthy and so much fun, etc. When the young man was introduced to the 60-ish sisters, he was quite upset. The brothers thought it was hilarious.

Why is it Called Lorin?

By John Ginno Aronovici

For many years Berkeleyans and Berkeley historians have pondered this small mystery. Rumors and guesses abounded. Was there a Mr. Lorin? Was there a Miss Lorin something? The name Lorin for the South Berkeley area appeared on maps in the 1880s and the train stop was named Lorin. The most frequent explanation centered around some kind of mix-up committed by the U.S. Postal Service.

A strong proponent of this story was Hal Johnson whose column for the Berkeley Daily Gazette, Hal Johnson, So We Are Told started in the 1940's and continued into the 1950s. This version of the story of Lorin originally appeared in January 1, 1952. A similar story is told in Durham's Place Names of the S.F. Bay Area book.

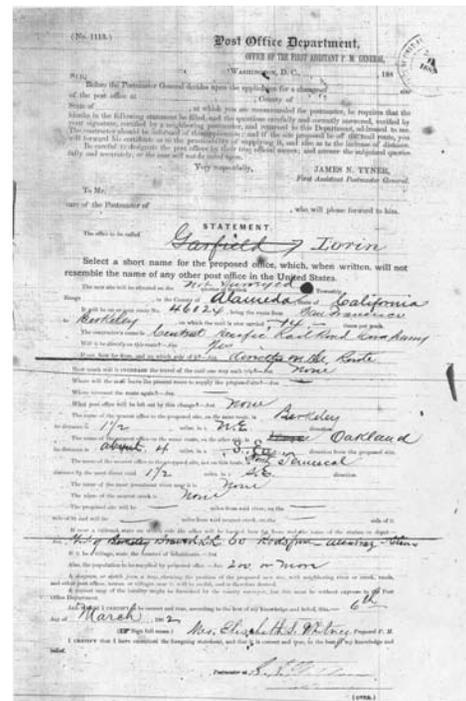
An opportunity to clarify and verify the story of Lorin's naming appeared this year with Robin Irwin who stopped at the BHS tent at the Solano Stroll. A follow-up meeting at the BHS History Center found Robin with the Johnson articles and

a family genealogy chart showing his Great-Grandmother (Elizabeth S. Whitney) as the first postmistress who had petitioned the Postal Service for a post office in the area.

The story of the post office has been passed down generation to generation in his family. Mrs. Whitney purchased a house in 1879 from Edward Harman, an early settler in South Berkeley. Her daughter, Carrie, married H.D. Irwin who became an early real estate agent and civic leader. Their daughter, Francis Irwin is the mother of Robin Irwin.

Mrs. Elizabeth S. Whitney circulated a petition for a post office in 1881 for the area and planned on calling it Garfield, probably in honor of President James A. Garfield. She forwarded her petition to the Post Office Department in Washington D.C. Mrs. Whitney's petition was returned with Garfield crossed off by the Postmaster's office and the name Lorin written in.

One unverified story is that at the same time a similar petition for a post office in Oregon called Florin was sent and the requests were mixed up. But, since there is no Lorin or Florin post office in Oregon, this may not be the case. There is also no Garfield post office in California,



United States Postal Service document designating the Post Office, crossing out Garfield and naming it Lorin

so there would have been no reason to deny the name Garfield.

So, we now know that the post office did change the proposed name. But we still don't know why or where the name came from. The Lorin post office lasted from 1882 until 1902 when the area was annexed to Berkeley and the Post Office name was changed to the South Berkeley Post Office.



H.D. Irwin office c1910, 3264 Adeline Street (The family lived at 3266) Note sign : Post Office, Train tickets, Waiting room



Photo by Mark Coplan

The Berkeley Historical Society recently held a photo contest. The theme was " How Berkeley Can You Be." Pictured are the winners in the high school division with Allen Stross, BHS Board Member who organized the event. The winners were: **FIRST PLACE:** Gretta Mattei and Ellen Williams. **SECOND PLACE:** Amber Price and Bacilla Bran. **THIRD PLACE:** Amanda Swain.

Become a part of History

Your annual donation supports the Berkeley Historical Society, an all-volunteer 501 (c)3 organization, to archive and promote Berkeley history. Your membership dues include a one-year Newsletter subscription, notification of up-coming events at the Center and merchandise discounts at the Berkeley History Center. Thank you for your contribution.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Sponsor (5 years) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Contributor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life Member |

On behalf of Berkeley

Volunteers maintain the Berkeley History Center and serve on the Board of Directors. We are a happy bunch! Join us for archiving, exhibit and event planning, photograph scanning and staffing the history Center. learn something new everyday and be proud knowing that you are preserving Berkeley history. Give us a call at 510 848 0181 or drop by thursday through Saturday 1-4 pm. How can I help promote Berkeley History?

- be a docent one afternoon a month
- help put up exhibits
- catalog acquisitions
- help with the educational program
- help with oral history projects
- do research
- help with fundraising
- write articles for the newsletter
- donate items to the archive
- other interests _____

WE ARE PRESERVING BERKELEY'S HISTORY

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

(So we can notify you of special events & confirm a reservation)

Calendar of Events

September 27, 10am – Walking Tour: Oakland's Walkways and Streetcar Heritage. For more information, call Oakland Heritage Alliance 510-763-9218.

September 28, 10am – Walking Tour: Oakland's Richmond Blvd. For more information, call Oakland Heritage Alliance 510-763-9218.

February 2, 7:30pm – Lecture: The Legacy of Berkeley Parks, The Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar Street.

February 4, 10am – Walking Tour: Emeryville Public Art, Berkeley Path Wanderers. For more information, call 510-528-3246.

February 12, 10am – Walking Tour: Birding at the Waterfront for ages 50+, Friends of Five Creeks. For more information, call 510-524-9122

February 12, 7:30pm – Lecture: The WPA and the Oakland Park System, Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont, Oakland. For more information, call Oakland Heritage Alliance 510-763-9218.

February 26, 7pm – Lecture: Musing on Modernism, Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. For more information, call 510-748-0796.

March 4, 10am – Walking Tour: Geocaching on the Paths, Berkeley Path Wanderers. For more information, call 510-528-3246.

March 7, 10am – Power Walking Tour: John Hinkel Park, Acacia Walk, Grizzly Peak Blvd., Vistamont with a return via Easter Way. For more information, call 510-848-2944.

March 15, 2pm – Lecture: Allensworth: California's African-American Town, Oakland Museum. For more information, call 510-238-2200

March 26, 7pm – Lecture: Fair, Please – The 1915 World's Fair, Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. For more information, call 510-748-0796.

April 30, 7pm. Lecture: A.A. Cohen and Old Fernside, Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. For more information, call 510-748-0796.

Exhibits

A Bond of Perpetuity: Lincoln's Legacy in Oakland, Oakland History Room, Main Library, 125 14th Street, Second Floor. Through March 20.

Charles and Louise Keeler—A Collaboration of Literature and Art, Inspired by Love, Berkeley History Center, 1931 Center. Through March 30



Berkeley Historical Society

POST OFFICE BOX 1190
BERKELEY, CA 94701
510 848 0181

Non Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Permit #131
Berkeley, CA