

# ***A Walk along Strawberry Creek on the UC Berkeley Campus***

***Susan Schwartz, President, Friends of Five Creeks***

*This walk focuses on the Strawberry Creek, with information from Tim Pine, who heads restoration efforts that have been ongoing on the UC campus since 1987. I hope that you can find answers to many unrelated questions by looking at the handout, which focuses on history and architecture.*

From Oxford at Frank Schlessinger Way, take the trail along the south side of the creek through recent plantings where native vegetation has replaced ivy (or take the walkway on the north side and cross at the first bridge). Follow rough trails near the creek west of Life Science Annex to where you see the confluence of the North and South Forks (note check dam waterfall on North Fork).

The private College of California, founded in Oakland in 1855, bought land here in 1860 largely because of this water supply. The land was gentle savannah with oaks, sycamores, and bays, and salmon and steelhead spawned in the creeks. (The dwindling run ended in the 1930s, when WPA projects culverted nearly all of the creek through Berkeley.)

In 1866, the college commissioned a plan by Frederick Law Olmstead. He envisioned a park-like campus between the creeks, with an east-west axis and roads edging the outside of both forks. He designed Piedmont Avenue to attract wealthy residents to the area (then mostly dairy farms). These aspects of his plan survived the 1868 merger of the struggling private college with California's new land-grant college.

With two brick buildings completed, the University moved to Berkeley from Oakland in 1873. A small middle fork was culverted to build a running track, and the eucalyptus grove was planted to give it a windbreak to the west.

Follow the south fork along Life Sciences Annex and cross to the rain garden in Dwinelle Lawn. This low area with rushes and other natives slows and purifies runoff from parking and walkways. Continue south to the creek, cross (note drains and channel structures), and follow the creek east between Dwinelle Annex (John Galen Howard (hereafter JGH) 1920) and Alumni House (1954), and then alongside giant Dwinelle Hall (note grizzly bear statue), to Sather Gate (JGH 1913.)

In 1899, Phoebe Hearst, widow of the mining magnate and mother of the newspaper magnate, sponsored an international design contest for the campus. A Parisian architect won, but most influential in the end was the 4<sup>th</sup> place finisher, John Howard, trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and a neo-classicist. He founded the university's school of architecture and was hired as campus architect. In his more than 20 years in the post, he designed some 20 buildings including Sather Tower (the campanile), the Greek Theater (1903), California Hall (1905), Hearst Mining (with Julia Morgan, 1907), Main Library (1917), Wheeler, LeConte, Durant and more. He set the east-west axis that now is Campanile Way, and established the signature of neo-classical style carried out in white Sierra granite.

Telegraph Avenue originally ran to Sather Gate (JGH 1911). The nudes on the new grant entry were removed when Jane Sather objected, and not restored until 1987 – this time with the females, not the males, above the inscription “Erected by Jane K. Sather.” Until Sproul Plaza was opened in 1961, the gate was the focus of demonstrations, especially during the Great Depression.

East of the gate, the meander and small amphitheater are recent. Note the giant high-flow-bypass tunnel leading behind the old powerhouse. Continue south of the creek past the old powerhouse (JGH 1904) with 1936 WPA mosaics from its tour of duty as an art gallery. Loop behind Anthony Hall (Pelican Building, 1956, influenced by the aged Bernard Maybeck. Anthony donated it to house the humor magazine he founded as an undergrad in 1903. Anthony and Alumni House may be the main relics of a 1940s plan to fill most open areas with one-story buildings.)

Stop for the view at the first bridge west of Moses Hall (originally Eshleman Hall). Moses as well as Moderne Valley Life Sciences Building, Art Deco Edwards Stadium, castle-like Bowles Hall, and “Moorish” International House, were designed by George Kelham, JGH’s successor. Kelham, who had designed San Francisco’s old Main Library and Federal Reserve, was eclectic and didn’t wield JGH’s power. In any case, Depression and war curbed building in the 1930s and 40s. Next to Moses is romantic Stephens Hall, 1923 -- one of JGH’s last before he was fired as campus architect. (He objected to the Hearst’s hiring Bernard Maybeck and Julia Morgan.) Stephens bows to land contours, but the creek was re-routed to fit.

Continue east through Faculty Glade (Goodspeed Natural Area) past the north side of the Faculty Club (Bernard Maybeck, 1903). The “big inch” culvert, carrying most of the original creek drainage, joins the creek here. Continue past the log cabin (Senior Men’s Hall, JGH 1906) to the west side of the Women’s Faculty Club (Bernard Maybeck, 1903) and then continue uphill on the south side of the building.

If you feel energetic, continue uphill through the Haas business-school complex to see the stadium undergoing seismic strengthening on the other side of Gayley Road. Before it was built (JGH of course, 1923) a sharp bend in the creek and a waterfall marked the Hayward Fault here. Many Berkeley residents vocally opposed the stadium – a call heard again before the current overhaul.

*Note: if you get tired, walk north of Hearst Mining Circle and catch the P shuttle to Berkeley BART.*

Returning or continuing on the east side of the Women’s Faculty Club, stop at the creek channel opposite the children’s playground below Girton Hall (Julia Morgan 1913). The “little inch” culvert brings a small amount of water into the original creek channel here. Originally it carried the whole creek under the stadium, but earthquake movement required building the “big inch.”

Follow the north bank of the creek westward, past the science and engineering complex that has mushroomed north and east from Gilman and LeConte Hall (JGH).

Turn north east of the Campanile (Sather Tower, 301 ft., John Galen Howard, 1913. Jane Sather, widow of a banker, also endowed professorships). Note the small bears – bears are engraved on the bell, too. Look down the Campanile Axis, JGH’s white neoclassic axis except for the oldest building on campus:

Italianate brick South Hall, (1873), built for teaching sciences. North Hall, built for letters, was torn down in 1917. Bricks were made from clay the foot of University Avenue. Memories of the 1868 earthquake were fresh; the building has an iron frame and iron reinforcement.

Walk north through the campanile esplanade. The pollarded sycamores were transplanted from the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition. Stored under your feet are fossils from the museum of paleontology.

Continue northwest, passing the ornate Main (Doe) Library (JGH 1917) via Memorial Glade and Pool, passing the new CV Starr East Asian Library (2008). The lowlands here at the foot of Observatory Hill was the first Botanical Garden, which moved uphill in the 1920s.

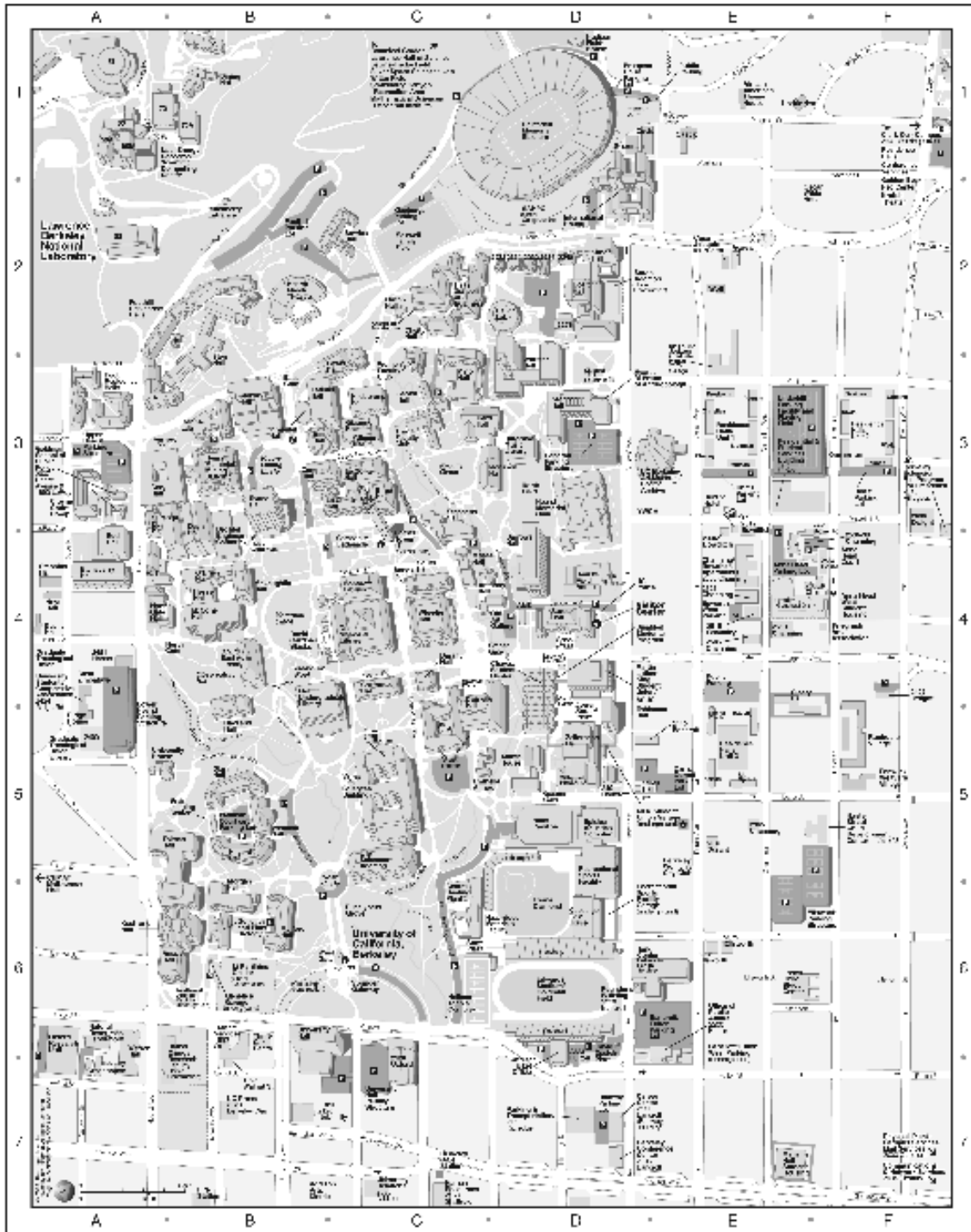
Continue to the North Fork at the Wickson Natural Area. Augmented by drainage piped from as far north as Rose Street, this branch enters campus from a culvert at Hearst and North Gate. as Rose Street. This reach is the Wickson Natural Area.

Cross the creek at the first bridge, or if you feel energetic continue past Haviland Hall (JGH 1924) to the second bridge (steps and uphill climb on the other side). Continue to the north side of the complex edged by Wellman (JGH 1912), Hilgard (JGH 1917), and Giannini (William C. Hays 1930), and really ugly trailers. Wellman Courtyard was redesigned in recent years to allow gatherings as well parking. Spaces between pavers let some runoff soak into soil. The small nursery supplies plants for creek restoration on campus.

Head south between Wellman and Giannini. Just above the vehicle bridge is the outlet from the main campus storm drain, which carries runoff from many buildings including Stanley Hall, source of the Dec. 10, 2011, oil spill. Cross on the pedestrian bridge and follow North Fork downstream through meadow to the confluence at the Eucalyptus Grove. Those who want can eat at the FSM café.



# UC BERKELEY CAMPUS MAP



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