



## A Cast Of Thousands Saw The Water Flow...

Those of you who were at Marin Circle on September 15 know that you were among several thousand friends and neighbors who turned out on a gray Sunday morning to dedicate John Galen Howard's lost landmark fountain.

For those of you who could not be there, here is a brief recap of what you missed. During the ceremony, four waterbearers poured pitchers of water from different symbolic sources into the fountain.

**Sylvia McLaughlin**, co-founder of the Save the Bay movement, had a vessel of water from San Francisco Bay; University of California Vice Chancellor **Horace Mitchell** brought water from the Hearst Mining Circle fountain, Berkeley's other water feature designed by John Galen Howard; **Thomas Hughes**, student director of the Berkeley Unified School District, supplied water from Marin Creek; and **Sarita Camille Waite**, fountain sculptor, poured some very good champagne into the fountain's bottom bowl in dedication and celebration. **Mayor Shirley Dean**, who had arrived on the scene riding atop a 1912 fire truck (courtesy of the **Berkeley Fire Fighters Association**), gave the signal to start the water flowing, and everyone was happy when it did just that. Emcee **Gerry Tierney** tied the whole event together.

The **Cal Straw Hat Band**, **UC Berkeley's Men's Octet** and **Golden Overtones** singing groups, and the **Berkeley High Jazz Band** provided musical entertainment as the crowd assembled in the traffic-free circle, in anticipation of the dedication.

*Inside this newsletter you'll find more highlights of the fountain dedication and information on how to get commemorative items, including a keepsake program. On the back page there's an important notice about a **meeting this month** to discuss the fountain and community issues about its use and maintenance.*



***There's the Mayor!  
There are the Bears!  
Were you here?***

*The whole photograph of the cast of thousands attending the September 15, 1996 fountain dedication is too big to reproduce in this newsletter. But you can see it at the North Berkeley Library through Nov. 2, and even order your own copy. See page 5 for details.*

***(Photo: Phillip Cohen)***

## "No Dream was Too Grand..."

*This brief fountain history was written by local historian Trish Hawthorne, and read by her at the dedication ceremonies.*

Eighty-five years ago, in 1911, a group of people gathered here in this circle to celebrate the completion of a beautiful beaux arts fountain. The Circle and its art features—fountain, balustrade, and walkway—had been designed by University of California architect John Galen Howard, later to become famous for the Campanile. The fountain was decorated with four grizzly bear cubs by celebrated animal sculptor Arthur Putnam. Together these men had created Berkeley's first public work of art to mark the heart of the new Northbrae district.

Most likely those 1911 celebrants had traveled to this spot by electric train or trolley, for Northbrae was at the center of a spider's web of railways. They would have walked up Fountain Walk, after getting off the train at the mouth of the new railway tunnel beneath The Circle. The hillsides around them would have been mostly open land, with only a scattering of houses rising out of the tall grass. This was "the country," so perhaps they came with picnics to enjoy near a creek or at one of the new Northbrae parks, such as Indian Rock, where they could admire the view. Perhaps they planned to tour the district, riding the trolley along Arlington Avenue, the new terraced roadway ornamented by a strip of planted park running its length like a brilliantly colored ribbon. They must have been thrilled by what they saw, by the man-made features that complemented the natural beauty of the landscape.

These were boom times; times when Berkeley was growing from a sleepy town into a beautiful city, proud to call herself the Athens of the West. No dream was too grand: being the home of the University seemed like a good reason to try to become the state capitol as well. The young California grizzly bear cubs on a classical fountain, linking city, university, state, and neighborhood, were well-chosen symbols for all the emerging Berkeley hoped to become.

As the years went by, the first fountain in this circle became a North Berkeley landmark. The neighborhood around it built up solidly to what we see around us today.



Two World Wars and the Great Depression came and went, the city grew and changed, and the web of railways was eventually removed, but the potbellied bears still stood guard here, linking city, university, state, and neighborhood.

In 1958 a truck crashing down Marin Avenue damaged the fountain beyond repair, and it was lost—lost, but not forgotten.

Only memory's gleam—aided by some wonderful old photos—kept the fountain alive. But that memory had more power than most dusty pieces of history. The designers of the original fountain knew the power of creating something beautiful for all to enjoy. They built the fountain because such things create a community identity, a vivid sense of place. In the 1990s the memory of that place was powerful enough to inspire hundreds of people to give time and money to restore a fountain that most of them had never seen.

Although eight and a half decades have passed since those earlier Berkeleyans came out to Northbrae to see the fountain, we respond to it as they must have, with pleasure and recognition that this is right. Certain places make us feel alive and human, make us feel connected to one another and stretch us to be our best selves. This place, with its wonderful proportions and elegant ornament, with all its parts again intact, does just that. We thank the creators of the fountain for their vision, and thank you all for reaffirming it—in 1996—so that all of us can once again enjoy Berkeley's first public work of art.

## "This Is A Day of Smiles!"

### *Dedication remarks by Mayor Shirley Dean*

This is a Day of Smiles! Smiles began building in anticipation as people first saw the installation of the fountain bowl, then the top--and the smiles kept getting broader and broader when the bears and the grass appeared. If you drove by here last Friday, you shared something in common--no matter who you were,



where you lived, whether you were on foot, on bicycle, or in a car, when you saw the fountain, even without the water, you felt good, and it showed on everyone's faces. You just felt good!

It was a wondrous transformation on a Friday after the stresses of a work week that's always hard: the international news is sobering, the routine of back-to-school is still getting adjusted, classes at Cal are bearing down, everybody has worries--but suddenly here is this wonderful, magical contraption right in the middle of the street! It doesn't contribute to the gross national product, it isn't an economic indicator, it can't be counted in the census, it's not listed on the NASDAQ, and it can't be included in the budget as a performance measure. What it does is simply and beautifully make us feel good, it renews our spirit and energy in these troubled times when little else does. It builds community, where people can break away from the walls built by troubles that pick at us in today's world. This fountain, with its walk and its surroundings, brings a smile to our faces and hearts and celebrates Berkeley--our community and us.

This is a magnificent gift from the Friends of the Fountain and Walk. We know intellectually that it is the largest product of a grassroots effort to improve a public space in the history of Berkeley, but it is far more than that. It is a

gift of joy; a gift that all of Berkeley will enjoy now and into the future; a gift that brings tranquillity and beauty into our lives and in so doing renews our energy, reinvigorates our purpose, and strengthens our community to do the great things that Berkeley is capable of doing. I want to thank everyone who gave time, money, and expertise to this project. Let's give them all a round of wild applause.

On behalf of the City of Berkeley, I officially accept this wondrous and magical gift--this Fountain of Smiles. Let the water flow to bring joy and hope into our lives today and in the future. Let's turn it on!

### *Dedication Verses*

*Athens whispered to our founders  
--Town and University--  
Urging them to build a city  
Ornamented classically.*

*Here on slopes of golden grassland  
Where once grizzlies roamed alone  
They caught a spring within a fountain  
Guarded by four bears of stone.*

*A thousand oaks of rolling hillside,  
A thousand home sites with a view  
Circled 'round the sparkling fountain  
In a Northbrae young and new.*

*Struck down by a truck in traffic  
--Broken, spilled, and swept away--  
The fountain gleamed only in memory  
Until this dedication day.*

*This is our own reborn fountain  
Drawn from sweet and civic springs  
Berkeley need not move a mountain  
Towns are built of smaller things.*

Berkeley resident and Landmarks Commission member Steve Finacom wrote and read this poem for the fountain ceremony, renewing an old Berkeley tradition of original poems at dedication events.



## The Water is On, But There's Still More to Do

With the outstanding efforts of **Chip Harley**, **Bill Steele**, and many volunteers from Friends of the Fountain and Walk, by September 15 the fountain was completed and operating beautifully, surrounded by the bright green of new grass and boxwood hedges. But there is still more to do to finish up the restoration of Marin Circle and Fountain Walk!

Here are some of the things that are on the punch list: lighting of the fountain (in progress, a contribution of **Jan Moyer Lighting Design**); improvement of Circle signage; improvement of Circle perimeter (benches, drinking fountain, commemorative plaque); Fountain Walk (irrigation,

plants, light, handrail); future projects include the restoration of the Arlington median strip and the development of the Mendocino median. The work goes on and it's not too late to become a Friend of the Fountain and Walk and join our volunteer efforts. *Please join us every 1st Saturday morning of the month from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM to help spruce things up. Bring your gloves and broom.*

**Lost and Found...** Berkeley resident Susan Chase lost an umbrella with a sunflower motif and great sentimental value at the dedication ceremony. If you know of its whereabouts, please call her at 526-4284.

**Did You Know...** if a gremlin seasons the fountain water with soap suds, it takes four hours to refill after draining? Help us keep an eye out to discourage this occasional practice.

## Local Heros...

*Berkeleyan **Bill Steele** (below), landscape contractor (**Land Art**) and his crew turned bare, baked earth and weeds into an emerald carpet in a matter of days, almost before our eyes.*



*Circle neighbor and fountain contractor, **Chip Harley** (of **Holland & Harley**) raced the calendar to complete the fountain so he could be with his wife, **Allyson**, to welcome the arrival of their beautiful daughter, **Lucia**, born Sept. 5. Congratulations! (Chip and Lucia shown above.)*

## Extras! Extras! Extras!

Use the coupon below to order any of the following:

**Programs:** We ran out of programs at the dedication, and now we have printed more. The program includes the names of individuals, businesses, and volunteers who donated to the fountain restoration. Order now if you never got one on September 15, or would like an extra. There is no charge.

**T-Shirts:** Many disappointed fountain supporters were unable to purchase a T-shirt at the dedication. A new supply of Friends of the Fountain and Walk T-shirts is now available. Sizes are Adult Small, Medium, Large, X-large, and Childrens' X-Small, Small, Medium, Large and XX Large.

**Notecards:** Commemorative notecards featuring the Marin fountain in a variety of artistic styles are still available. They are beautiful and make great gifts, too! A packet of 3 cards with envelopes (black and white line art) costs \$2.00; a packet of 2 cards with envelopes (watercolor) also costs \$2.00.

### All there in black and white!

**Photographs:** George Draper, a Circle neighbor and professional photographer took many black and white pictures during the celebratory event. To see them, look for the Marin Circle display at the **North Berkeley Branch Library** during regular library hours from now through November 2. Who knows...you might find a candid photo of yourself or your family and friends. *Order copies of photos by*

*using the form provided at the library display by November 2.*

**Panoramic Photo:** In 1911, the dedication of the first fountain at Marin Circle was recorded with a panoramic photo of the celebrants. This photo was recreated in 1996 by photographer Philip Cohen who, from his tall ladder used a special lens to include most of the thousands of people who had come to join in the festivities. See Phil's panoramic photo at the North Berkeley Library and place your order now for your own copy of this historic photo.

**Videotape:** A video of the September 15 event is being produced. If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please send in the coupon below, and we will contact you when it is ready.

**Order and response form.** Fill in only those sections for which you are ordering items; **don't forget to include your mailing address and telephone number.** Add up dollar amounts for purchases and/or membership, and enclose a check for the TOTAL amount, payable to Friends of the Fountain and Walk. Clip and mail entire form to Friends of the Fountain and Walk, P.O. Box 8192, Berkeley, Ca. 94707. Telephone 525-1743 with questions.

Yes, I would like to purchase ( ) **T-shirts.** (children's XS (2-4) S(6-8), M (10-12), L(14-16), \$10 each; Adult's, S, M, L, XL, \$12 each. Adult XXL Large \$15. (Price includes sales tax)

Size	Quantity	Price	Total \$
		X	=
		X	=
		X	=

**Notecards:** Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ sets of black and white cards, w/envelopes, at \$2/set.  
\_\_\_\_\_ sets of color cards with envelopes, at \$2/set  
Notecard \$ Total \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedication Program:** Yes, I would like to receive \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the program (no charge).  
**Dedication Video:** \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, let me know when video price and order information is available.

**Yes, I would like to become a Friend, or Renew Membership in the Amount of:** \_\_\_\_\_ \$25,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$50, \_\_\_\_\_ 100\$ \_\_\_\_\_ other

**TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

# Is It Art...Or Is It A Park?

## A Neighborhood Forum, October 30, 1996

(Northbrae Community Church. 7:00 PM)

The tremendous enthusiasm that the community has shown for its newly restored landmark fountain has also raised some important questions about public safety. Marin Circle today is a major traffic hub, and the fountain, a piece of art designed in 1911, stands as a different kind of centerpiece than before. To address areas of common concern, the City of Berkeley and the Friends of the Fountain and Walk are sponsoring a **open forum** to discuss such issues as pedestrian access, vandalism, traffic safety, landscape protection, and public use of fountain water.

**The goal of the forum is to gather ideas from everyone who cares about the newly recreated fountain and to find acceptable neighborhood resolutions to these important issues.**

This forum, moderated by Mayor Dean, is being held at Northbrae Community Church, Wednesday, October 30, 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Coffee will follow. Call 525-1743 for more information.

*This newsletter was produced by Friends of the Fountain and Walk, October 15, 1996 to provide a report on the Fountain dedication ceremony and current activities.*

*Page one photograph courtesy of Phillip Cohen.*

*All other photographs courtesy of George Draper.*

*Newsletter design by Steve Finacom*

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