



COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS WALKING TOURS

Route 2: Bywater Park & Apple Valley

Distance: 2.7 miles

Online Map: cottonwood-heights-walking-tours-chcity.hub.arcgis.com



This walk takes you through the Butler Bench. This area was once the ancestral lands of the Paiute, Goshute, Ute and Shoshone peoples, and later a large fur farm and orchards established by Mormon pioneers. The emerging town was called Butler simply because of the many members of the Butler family that settled nearby.

1. Cottonwood Heights Recreation Center (7500 S. 2700 E.)

Activities are offered year-round with both indoor and outdoor pools, tennis courts, pickleball courts, cardio and weight facilities, ice skating rink and much more. The Center, originally built in 1971, had just indoor pools and was called "The Spa." The outdoor pools were built in 1980. Since then, diving platforms and many water features have been added.

2. Dix and Wilkerson Homesteads

Look south. The area from 2700 East to 3100 East and south to Bengal Blvd. was the 160 acre homestead of William Dix, a miner who received a patent on the property in 1878. Shortly after receiving his patent, he moved to Park City. Around 1940, William B. Erekson and his sons purchased most of the original homestead. They ran a large fur farm until the 1960s. Fur farming was big business both here and throughout the state. Fur farmers bred and raised mostly mink, fox, beaver and chinchillas. The animal skins or pelts were sold to make garments such as coats, stoles, jackets and hats.

Look north. This was the homestead of Thomas Wilkerson and his wife. He applied for a homestead grant in 1869 and received his patent in 1874. He was said to be the first one to build a house on the Butler Bench. Their son and his family lived with them to help with the farm. When their daughter was killed in a tragic fire in Kanab, their son moved to Kanab to help with his sister's children. The elder Wilkerson then sold their property and moved to Payson to live with another daughter.

3. Butler Homesteads

Here were the homesteads of the brothers Leander and Alva Butler. Alva originally built a small house on this property that his brother deeded to him in 1885. In 1895, he purchased an additional 80 acres of land through the Land Act of 1820. Alva Butler owned and operated a saw mill. He held several positions as a bishop in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

4. Bywater Park (3149 E. Banbury Rd.)

Bywater Park is home to the Riley England Baseball Field. To honor the tragic passing of their son, the England

family gathered community support in 2006 to refurbish and improve the fields for youth baseball. The park is home to many teams as well as tennis players.

The meadow to the north is owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, currently closed to public use. Look east to the Wasatch Mountains. "Wasatch" means "low place in the high mountains" derived from Ute or other Numic languages. The low gap between the peaks is Big Cottonwood Canyon which divides two federal wilderness areas established in 1984: Mount Olympus to the north and Twin Peaks to the south.

5. Butler Homestead

At this corner is the middle of Leander Butler's 160 acre homestead which he acquired in 1872 through the Land Act of 1820. He paid \$1.25 an acre. He was one of five Butler brothers who would eventually build their homes on Leander's property.

6. McGhie Jr. Homestead

William McGhie Jr. moved to the area in 1867. In 1872, he obtained 160 acres of land through the State Agriculture College Act. He farmed hay and alfalfa. The large barn where he stored his hay was burned down by local youth playing with fire.

During the 1930s farmers living on the Butler Bench began replacing their crops with apple, peach, pear, apricot and cherry orchards. Note the streets' apple names: Pippen, Jonathan, Winesap, and Macintosh.

7. Ferguson Canyon

Look east. Ferguson Canyon has a large water tank on the south side. A popular hiking and rock climbing area, it is also well known for paragliding and rattlesnakes.

8. Old Wasatch Boulevard

On the south hillside between the homes at the bottom of the hill and the top of the hill is the path of Old Wasatch Blvd. This road was re-routed in the 1980s and is now a major north-south thoroughfare.

9. Big Cottonwood Canyon

Look east up Antler Way. From the north, the lowest gap is Big Cottonwood Canyon. To the right, or south, is the 11,436-acre Twin Peaks Wilderness Area which includes the 11,319-foot summit, appropriately dubbed Twin Peaks. This federally designated wilderness area is closed to motor vehicles and mechanized equipment. Halfway up the ridge to the horizon is a gray, rectangular-shaped block of granite called Hound's Tooth.

#2 Bywater Park and Apple Valley

- 1 Cottonwood Heights Recreation Center
- 2 Dix and Wilkerson Homesteads
- 3 Butler Homesteads
- 4 Bywater Park
- 5 Butler Homestead
- 6 McGhie Jr. Homestead
- 7 Ferguson Canyon
- 8 Old Wasatch Boulevard
- 9 Big Cottonwood Canyon

