

Daily Log



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Monday March 1, 2010

On the eve of Saint David's Day our host David and his family dropped by our rig to wish us well on our travels. Matt showed off one of his many hats.



Ben gave Percy a big hug

A big thanks to David and Suzanne for all the hospitality and for making us feel so welcome even though the Canadians did beat the Americans in hockey! Sorry Suzanne.



Tuesday March 2, 2010

We pulled out of the backyard campsite early and headed up to Morris Chevrolet to get a new tire put on the rig. After some discussion with David, the Directors of Operations, and Dave, the Service Manager, it was decided that we should replace all

of the tires. (what is it about all these Daves??)

Mike watches while the tires are mounted.



Percy waits patiently in the sun.

We did not get out until 3 pm. heading north along the coast, officially starting our journey back to Canada.

There was lots of traffic and we caught a glimpse of the ocean at Pismo Beach (sea level) before turning inland and climbing to 1522 feet at the Cuesta Pass.

Finally after a few hours of driving we turned off the 101 and travelled down through the beautiful Los Padres Forrest.



After a steep downwards road with a sharp right hand turn, we found ourselves on Paradise Road. Our final destination was indeed a little bit of heaven, but the road there is not for the faint of heart, with many steep inclines and sharp turns.

A sign welcomed us to Ranch Oso. It is a combination Horse Ranch and RV Resort tucked into a lush valley.





The sites are all terraced on the side of the hill. We chose one near the top.



Mike set up the internet dish and soon we were settled in a very comfortable with gorgeous views all around us.



Wednesday March 3, 2010

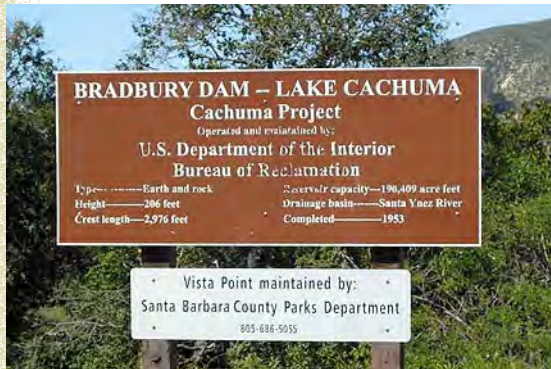
We spent the day hiking around the resort and working on taxes.
It is almost a pleasure to work in such a calm and peaceful place.



Thursday March 4, 2010

Went for a day trip to see some of the local sights.

Drove past beautiful Lake Cachuma



Past a hill covered with wildflowers in bloom



Soon we
were in
Solvang

We felt as if we had landed in Denmark.



They even have a little mermaid statue just like the one in Denmark, only smaller.

The buildings are wonderful reproductions' but some of the signs remind us that we are still in North America.



Not sure what this sign is all about!

More pretty sites and buildings



The flower boxes were



gorgeous

We stopped for lunch at Dos Carlitos in the village of Santa Ynez, where we had the best Mexican Food we have tasted in a long time.

On the way home we followed a fifth wheel as it negotiated the twists and turns of the narrow road to the resort. Fortunately the worst curves have mirrors so you can see if anyone is coming. At one point the fiver had to back up as there was a truck coming the other way.



Friday March 5, 2010

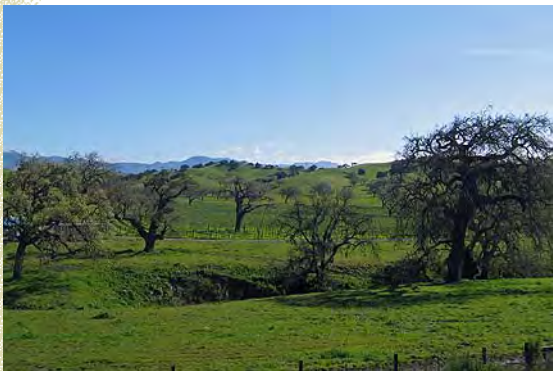
Rather cool and wet so a good day to work on paperwork and catch up on sleep.



Monday March 8, 2010

Time to leave Paradise and make some tracks north again. Our destination - San Jose.

We passed many ranches as we traversed the 101.



Percy had a great time barking at the cows.

There were more vineyards than we could ever imagine. It is no wonder that California can produce inexpensive wines with all the thousands of acres of grapes that are grown here.



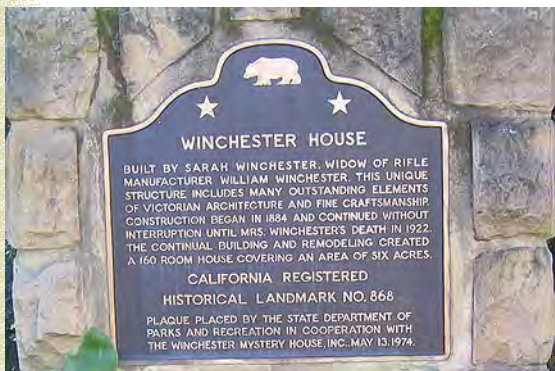
Our stop for the night - the parking lots across from the Winchester Mystery House.



The view from our rig

Tuesday March 9, 2010

We walked across the road and entered an amazing house.



While waiting for the tour we checked out some of many items made by the Winchester company. They are most famous for their guns, but also manufactured lots of tools and household items.

In the museum this gingerbread house is a fantastic replica of the house that Sarah Winchester built.



The real house was built to ward off evil spirits after the death of Sarah's daughter and husband.



Legend states that as long as building continued on the house she would live eternally.

After going up and down the many stairs and in and out of a multitude of doors, we had a tour of the gardens, outer buildings and the basement.





In the garden this pussy willow tree reminds us that it is spring.

For more info on Winchester House see www.winchestermysteryhouse.com

Percy was waiting for us back at the rig where we grabbed a quick lunch and then it was off to Pleasanton.



Campsites on the coast are extremely expensive, so we chose to stay a bit inland at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. The sites were quite narrow and just barely long enough for our rig, but we were not planning to spend much time there as our goal was to see the sites of San Francisco.



Wednesday March 10, 2010

Spent the day planning our itinerary for the next three days. We found a fantastic deal on the web. The "Go Card" gave us admission to 60 attractions in the Bay Area. There was no way to see all of them in three days, but the card made it affordable to see many more than we would have otherwise.

For details see www.GoSanFransiscoCard.com



Thursday March 11, 2010

We took the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) from Pleasanton to downtown in about 45 minutes. Then we walked to pick up the Go Cards that we had ordered online.

After a short bus trip we arrived at Fisherman's Wharf.



The area is famous for its sour

dough

And of course for fish and seafood



There are lots of different ways to get around town

We chose to start with a cruise



Not on this one!



Of course the highlight was seeing the Golden Gate bridge



We got a close-up look of the famous Alcatraz



Back on land, time for lunch at Salty`s. Mike had Fish and Chips.



Maureen had half a Fishwich. It was super yummy!

While waiting for the bus tour we saw this sign about Abe Warner (perhaps a long lost relative of Maureen`s ?)



The bus arrived and off we went to see the sites of the city.



There were many, many examples of Victorian architecture.



The streets were steep (Lombard Street)





This is the church were Marilyn Monroe and Joe Dimagio posed so that the family back in Italy would not know that their marriage had been at city hall.

More great buildings



Then it was into China Town were the locals use their windows to dry their clothes.





Even though it was sunny and warm, the top of the bus was rather chilly, especially when our driver, Leo raced from spot to spot.



This is the tallest building in SF and was pointed out to us at every opportunity.

The beautiful City Hall



Some of the statues

In the Rainbow District



The Famous Seven Ladies



The little bear from the sit com "Full House"

Magnificent style and colour.



Another church



Into Golden Gate Park



The Bridge as seen from land

We were there!



After the bus tour we decided to try out the Trolley Car



Turning the car around



While waiting for our turn we talked to people in line and enjoyed the views



Finally time to board. Mike chose to stand on the outside where he had to hold on for dear life.



Friday March 12, 2010

Up early again to make the most of our *Go Card*. Unfortunately the sunny skies of yesterday had been replaced by clouds and rain. We took the *Bart* again and then after a long wait, took a *MUNI* bus to the *Golden Gate Park* for a visit to the *Academy of Science Museum*.

There were throngs of people of all ages who had also decided this would be a good day for indoor sightseeing.

The turtle exhibit was quite popular.



Downstairs we saw lots of magnificent fish and an *Albino Alligator*.





Next we visited the Planetarium where we were treated to an awesome show describing how stars and planets are made.

By then we were hungry, so we had lunch at the Cafeteria. A bit pricey - but excellent food that was cooked to order.

Outside it was raining even harder. We found a bus to take us back downtown.

We bumped into this weird salesman with a few extra fingers.



Then we took a ride on the Zeum Carousel in the Yerba Buena Gardens.

Mike chose a comfy seat.



Maureen picked a pretty horse, but when the ride began she discovered that it was not made to go up and down.

She asked the friendly operator where the brass ring was. He said there wasn't one - so she tried to grab his earring instead.



We found out that the Go Card is good for two rides - so we tried out some other seats.

Maureen finally found a horse that could trot.



Here is a picture of the Carousel in it's original building in 1906.

It has survived 2 earthquakes and a fire that destroyed the park it was in.

After the Carousel we went to the Cartoon Art Museum and a rather bizarre display at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

By then it had stopped raining, but we were tired, so we boarded the BART again and rode back to Pleasanton.

This city is well named. On our short drive to and from our campsite we see well maintained businesses and trees with so many blooms that they look like they are covered with snow.





Saturday March 13, 2010

The sun was shining again when we boarded the train for our last trip into the Bay Area.

We had seen all the things that were of interest to both of us, so we decided to split up for the day and visit different places.

Maureen stayed downtown for a while and checked out Macy's Department Store.

Then she took a bus north west to Pacific Heights and walked to Franklin Street. On the map it looked like an easy stroll, but it turned out to be quite a workout, due to the steep incline. Along the way she stopped frequently to admire the unique houses and beautiful gardens.





Maureen's destination was the Haas-Lilienthal House.



She arrived just as the first tour was starting.



This house is a wonderful example of Victorian Style Architecture which was quite popular in San Francisco in the early 1900's. It survived the 1906 earthquake whereas houses just 1 block away were sacrificed to stop the fires from spreading.

Larger houses on either side of this house were torn down in the 50s to make way for apartment buildings.

Our tour guide on the front porch.

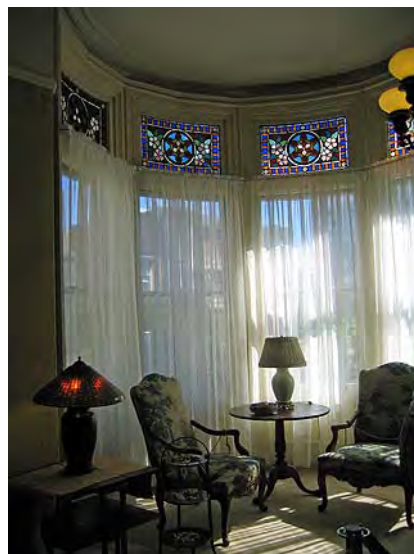


One of the many fireplaces

The dining room, where the gas lights have been updated with electricity.



The upstairs bedroom in the turret.



The electric train that was in the attic.



After the house tour, Maureen used the Go Card to get a ticket for a 2 hour walking

tour of the neighbourhood. Unfortunately the tour guide did not show up, so Maureen had a tour on her own.



After a pleasant walk, the trolley took Maureen back uptown to Union Square.

The St. Patrick's parade had just ended and there were throngs of people everywhere, including this group of "brides" decked out in high heels and veils.



Finally it was back to the Powell Street BART station to meet up with Mike. While waiting there was lots of entertainment including two buskers dancing their hearts out.



Lots of young girls in every colours under the sun.

Around every corner there are buildings that are absolutely amazing.



Maureen wondered why the Trolley had not made an appearance.

A call from Mike answered her question. One of them had broken down and he was now on a bus headed her way.

So it was back to people watching.



While Maureen visited houses, Mike had travelled back to Fisherman's Warf



He had planned to take a tour to the Island to see Alcatraz, but unfortunately all the tickets were gone by 10:30 am.

Mike was entertained for a while by buskers.



Then he took a tour on a replica of a motorized cable car around the city's most scenic neighbourhoods,





Finally Mike arrived at the BART station and we said good-bye to the "city by the bay". We will definitely be back again to enjoy the many attractions that this vibrant city has.

The BART was a perfect way to travel and very reasonable priced at \$5.55 for a one way ticket.



We parked each day at the BART lot for only \$1.00



Sunday March 14, 2010

We packed up and were all ready to leave the Alameda campground at noon, but had a small problem with getting the front of the rig to go up. After trying a few things Mike was able to get it to work and we were off under sunny skies.

We saw more vineyards and cows as we travelled north on the 101. This hill was covered in oil reservoirs.



We crossed a long bridge west of Berkley.

After three hours of driving we turned off the 101 at Cloverdale.



Then it was down into the valley, where we stopped at the Russian River Resort, and were greeted by - who else????
Ranger Davel.



This RPI/Thousand Trails park is situated in a forest that reminds of us of many State Parks. Most of the sites are separated from each other by thick vegetation. After a walkabout, we found a suitable pull through lot and in no time we were set up and enjoying the solitude and warm weather.



Monday March 15, 2010

Spent the day working on websites, making bread, doing laundry and soaking in the sunshine. After dinner took a walk down to see the River. Percy had a blast running on the beach.

