



In Search of Eldorado

Link to the Eldorado Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VczD1olutQ8>



Hello to Family & Friends

I couldn't find a sign for San Clemente so I stuck the Dana Point one up there instead.

San Clemente was the best seaside town so far. The architecture was very Spanish with a lot of white plaster walls, red tile roofs and towers.

The main drag was interesting to walk, but hardly anything was open until 10:00, with the exception of the farmer's market in all the tents. This was fun since I missed the one in Oceanside by two days.

I found some very fresh, locally grown strawberries, about the size of a computer mouse. I believe this was the first time I ever bit into a strawberry and had juice running down my chin. YUM!



Day 45
Sunday,
February 16th

San Clemente
To
San Juan Capistrano

Weather
50's to 60's Sunny

In Search of Eldorado

By Edgar Allan Poe

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow—
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
'Shadow,' said he,
'Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,'
The shade replied,—
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



The farmers market

I couldn't resist this sign in a shop window, especially with three daughters.

I HAVE ENOUGH
CLOTHES AND
SHOES. I DON'T
NEED TO GO
SHOPPING

—SAID NO
WOMAN
EVER



Since the stores weren't open, I opted for a haircut, sorry Jane. As I walked the streets afterwards I noticed at least a half dozen barber shops on the main street. Not sure if this is because I just had the services of one or if there were so many they were hard to miss. Like when you buy a new car and suddenly see the same model everywhere on the road. I didn't think another pier was worth the effort, so I drove up the road to Dana Point. I am officially on US 1 now, the Pacific Coast Highway.



This was another surprise for me. I knew the ship PILGRIM was docked here, that was on my list, but not an entire institute.



This is the best angle I could manage to get the entire ship into the viewfinder.



I had better luck with the SPIRIT OF DANA POINT, but she had no tours today.

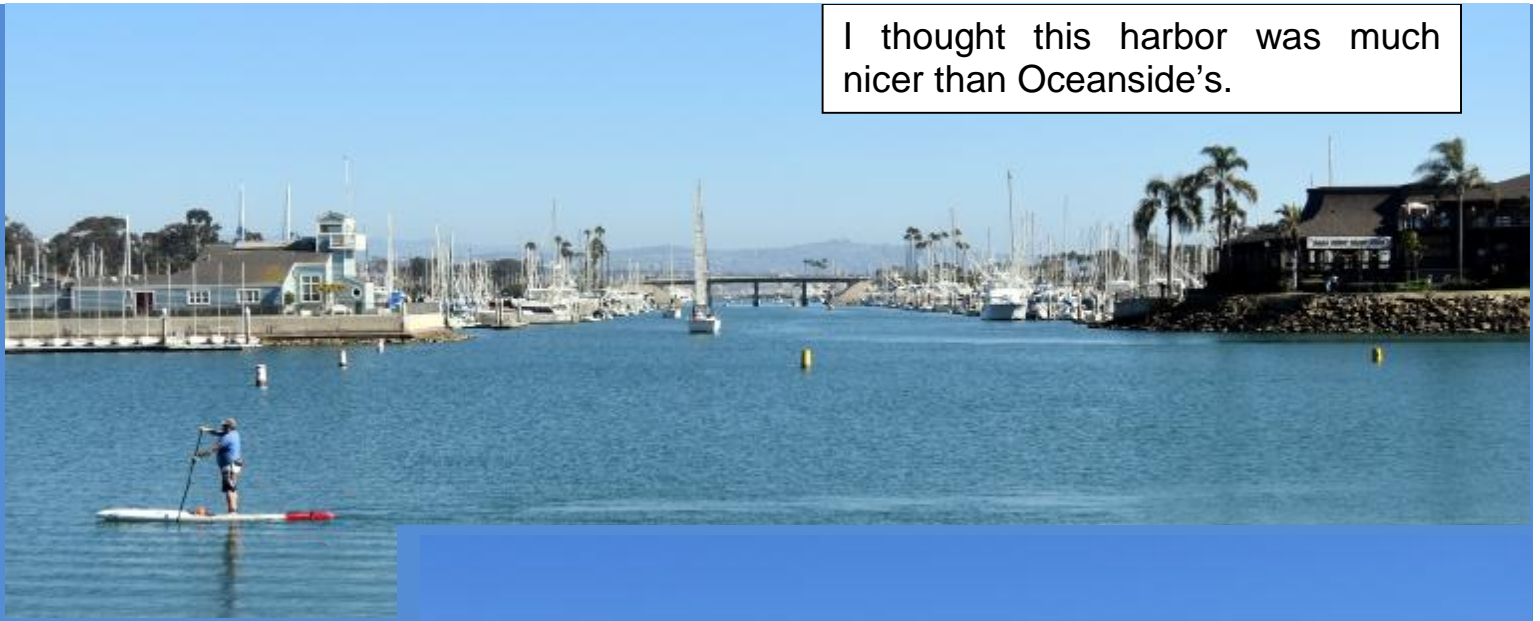


It was much better having a guided tour than reading a bunch of plaques (Maritime Museum), and Ryan did a good job.

The PILGRIM figurehead. I guess it looks like a Pilgrim.



I thought this harbor was much nicer than Oceanside's.



After the next earthquake those houses will be down here where I am.



MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

Mission San Juan Capistrano was founded in 1776 by Saint Serra. As the seventh of the 21 California missions, and the only mission in Orange County, it hosts the State's most historically significant chapel, Serra Chapel (1782) and the ruins of the Great Stone Church (1806-1812). The mission welcomes people from all over the world as a place of inspiration and education. Mass is celebrated daily.

Ah ha, I know what you're thinking once again, two days in a row, because I'm thinking the same thing this time (back in the 70's I spent a week in England and saw a lot of cathedral ruins, enough that I got tired of cathedral ruins), I even hesitated driving out here, maybe I could just get a picture of the church from the street. (A piece of advice, never visit San Juan Capistrano on a Sunday) I had a little incident with pulling into a parking lot that had only one exit and nowhere to turn around. I backed that RV right around the U and out into the street. There was also a left hand turn where I thought I might tip over. I found parking and walked over to the Mission, checked the prices, walked away, then went on in. I mean, after all, it is San Juan Capistrano.



This is basically how the mission looked in 1812. I tried to limit my photos, since I felt they would be similar to yesterdays. But I did find this mission to be interesting. Probably because they had an audio tour system and about 30-40 spots where you could press a button and learn about that area.

The Legend of the Swallows of Capistrano



The swallows mud houses

In his book, *Capistrano Nights*, Father St. John O'Sullivan, Pastor of Mission San Juan Capistrano (1910-1933), tells the story of how the swallows first came to call the Mission home.

The Legend of the Swallows

● *One day, while walking through town, Fr. O'Sullivan saw a shopkeeper, broomstick in hand, knocking down the conically shaped mud swallow nests that were under the eaves of his shop.*

The birds were darting back and forth through the air squealing over the destruction of their homes.

"What in the world are you doing?" O'Sullivan asked.

"Why, these dirty birds are a nuisance and I am getting rid of them!" the shopkeeper responded.

"But where can they go?"



"I don't know and I don't care," he replied, slashing away with his pole. "But they've no business here, destroying my property."

O'Sullivan then said, "Come on swallows, I'll give you shelter. Come to the Mission. There's room enough there for all."

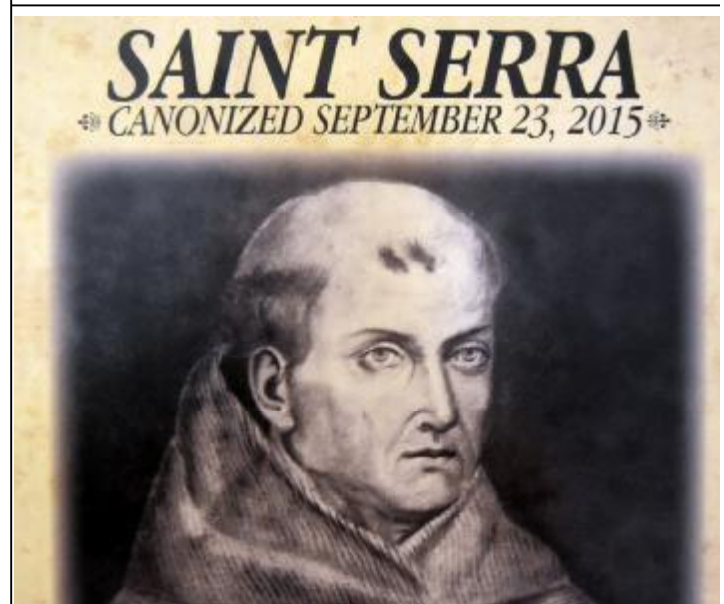
The very next morning, Father O'Sullivan discovered the swallows busily building their nests outside Father Junipero Serra's Church.



*Father O'Sullivan
Mission Pastor (1910-1933)*

In the early 2000's there was a need to fortify the old church (photo a little later) for earthquakes. This took an incredible 15 years, most of which involved heavy scaffolding that surrounded the church and kept the swallows from building their nests. An effort was made, with the help of a swallow expert, to get the birds to nest at the church again once the work had been completed. Some of the tricks were building the nests above left and playing the mating call of the swallow. It took a few more years, but one morning the sound of baby swallows in their nests was heard outside of the Serra Chapel. The swallows were beginning to return.

The day they fly in is usually March 19th. I won't be here for that.




I guess I have to refer to him as Saint Serra from now on.



I should have moved closer to take this picture so you could appreciate the detailed carving. But, not wanting to disturb anyone I just zoomed in from the back of the church.

Just as with Father Kino, I wondered if there was ever a movie made about him, turns out there was. SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD was made in 1955 starring Michael Rennie (THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL) as the good Father. I'll have to see if I can find that one when I get home. I never could find the Father Kino movie.



 **Investigating Architecture**

Look Up!

The sycamore beams and strips of reed that you see above are original materials used to construct this building in the late 1780s. To maintain a comfortable temperature, builders added an insulating layer of adobe mud and plaster over the reeds.

In the 1990s, building conservators stabilized the ceiling with metal bars for earthquake safety, and left the ceiling exposed to show the original roofing materials and building methods.



The Lincoln Document

The California Missions were secularized in the early 1800s with the intention of transferring California mission property to the Native Americans who had helped build them. But in reality, most mission landholdings were sold off or given in large land grants to influential Californios (people of Spanish descent living in California).

In 1845, Mexican Governor Pío Pico sold Mission San Juan Capistrano at auction to his brother-in-law, John Forster, for \$710 worth of hides and tallow, even though it had previously been appraised for \$55,000. Serra Chapel, however, remained the community's church. Various priests would be assigned to serve the small community of San Juan Capistrano and permitted to live in a spare room adjacent to John Forster and his family.

When John Forster (also called Don Juan) and his wife, Isidora Pico Forster, moved into the former Mission, they renovated the South Wing, the site of the padres' former living quarters. Though much of the old Mission was in ruins when the Forsters arrived, it may have been saved from oblivion by the family's renovations during their twenty-year residency.

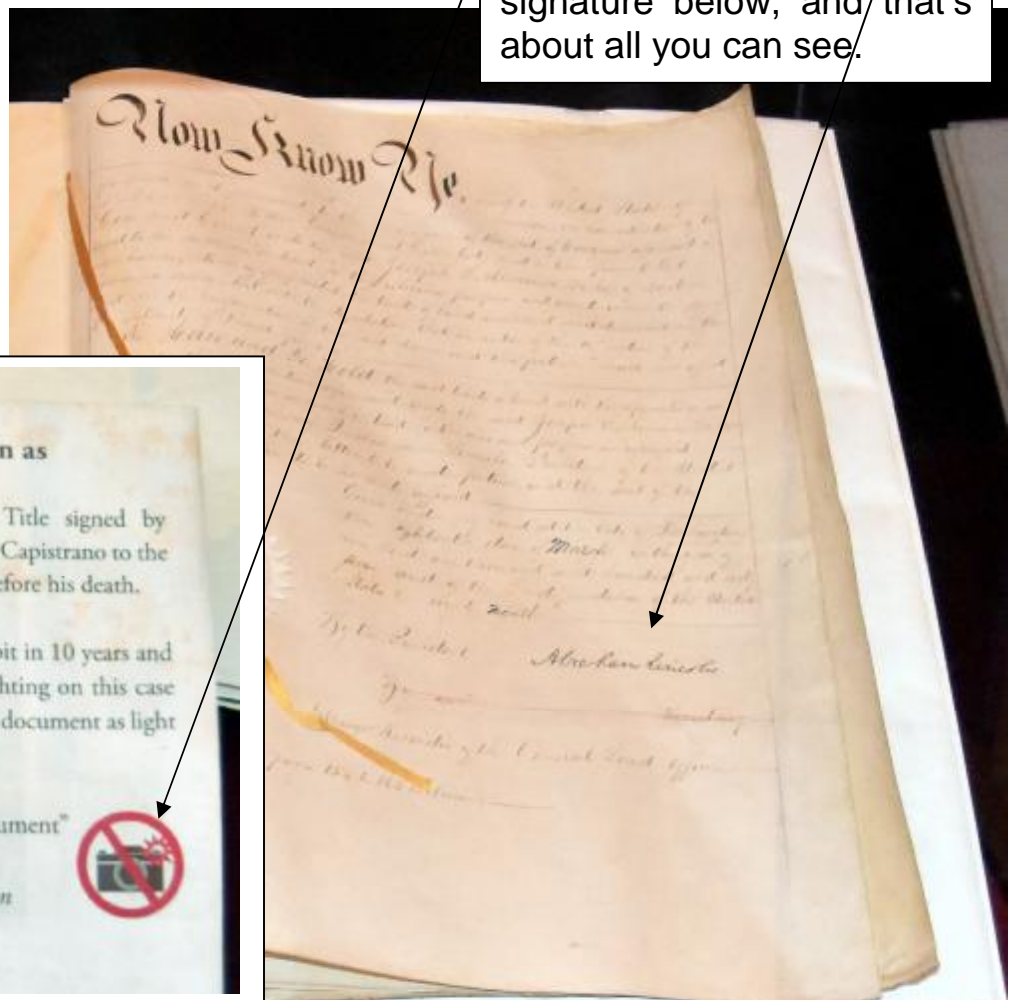
Not long after the Forsters made the Mission their private home, war broke out between Mexico and the United States over annexation of the southwestern territories. The Mexican American War—1846 through 1848—gave the United States ownership of key southwest territories including the areas that would later become California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado.

Shortly after granting statehood to California, the United States Congress set up a Land Commission to verify all land claims in the state, specifically land grants given during Mexican rule. In 1853, California's first Catholic Bishop, Joseph Alemany, entered a petition challenging the sale of California missions to private rancho holders. For each mission, Alemany filed a separate case with the US Land Commission. Ultimately, each California mission was deeded back to the Catholic Church between 1855 and the 1870s.

Although the US Land Commission ruled in favor of returning Mission San Juan Capistrano to the Catholic Church in 1855, John Forster continued litigation and retained possession until 1865. President Abraham Lincoln signed a Patent of Title officially declaring Mission San Juan Capistrano property of the Catholic Church on March 18, 1865. The Forsters, who had called the Mission home for nearly twenty years, moved on to their newly built hacienda at Rancho Santa Margarita (present day Camp Pendleton).

TITLE: PATENT OF TITLE, OR "THE LINCOLN DOCUMENT"
DATE: MARCH 18, 1865
Mission San Juan Capistrano Archives Collection

It was fairly dark in this room so I turned on the flash. I looked around for a sign telling me no flash photography, which I expected and is normal with older documents. I couldn't find one. So I took the photos. It wasn't until I looked at them while editing that I saw the no flash symbol. Oh well. You can clearly see Lincoln's signature below, and that's about all you can see.



Original Patent of Title, also known as The Lincoln Document

This document is the original Patent of Title signed by Abraham Lincoln, returning Mission San Juan Capistrano to the Catholic Church. It was signed just 3 weeks before his death.

The Lincoln Document has not been on exhibit in 10 years and there are no plans to display it again. The lighting on this case has been lowered for better preservation of the document as light causes irreversible damage to paper.

TITLE: Patent of Title, or "The Lincoln Document"
DATE: March 18, 1865

Mission San Juan Capistrano Archives Collection





This mission church was the largest of them all in Alta California. Construction began in 1797 and took nine years to complete. The church served mass for six years until December 8th, 1812. While mass was in session the church began to shake. A magnitude 6.9 earthquake brought the roof and walls down on top of the congregation. The bell tower shook with the first quake, and toppled completely with the aftershock. Forty perished in the ruins. The church was not rebuilt but left as a memorial to the victims.



The Great Stone Church

1797 – 1806 Under Construction
1806 – 1812 House of Worship
Dec. 8, 1812 Felled in Earthquake

May the Earthquake Victims Rest in Peace.



This bronze cast is what the Stone Church did look like. And the model a few pages up is even better than this one.



These are the four bells from the original bell tower. The large two on the left are copies of the originals which were recovered from the rubble but were damaged and are displayed in the footprint of the original clock tower. The two smaller bells to the right ARE the originals from the fallen tower. I can't remember from the audio when this Campanario was built for the bells, sorry. These are the bells which are rung on special occasions. such as feast days. San Juan Capistrano is famous for its bells.

I did find San Juan Capistrano much more interesting than San Luis Rey. I wish I would have come here first. I hope two missions in one week didn't bore you too much.

I mentioned parking earlier. The only spot I could find was in a strip mall parking lot by a Trader Joes.

Once I made it back to the RV I stayed there until bedtime, then I moved next to a panel truck over by the Goodyear Repair center. I like that idea. If asked I can always say I have a slow leak and am waiting to get it taken care of in the morning (most of which is true). So I may try to use this more often.

I will be making my way up the coast on the PCH. Unless requested, probably very few pictures of piers or beaches anymore. They are all beginning to look the same.

The cities are getting larger now as I hit the outskirts/suburbs of LA, no longer small pockets of beach houses and shops, but subdivision after subdivision.

The sun is also setting later every day and the temps are a little warmer every day. I just may jump in that ocean yet. I have been thinking about surfing lessons. When will I ever get the opportunity again?

Obviously I never did get to parasail. The winds have been pretty low during my whole time on the coast.

Until next time....