



In Search of Eldorado

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



Day 50
Friday,
February 21st

Hooray
For
Hollywood

Weather
50's to 70's Sunny

Hello to Family & Friends

The photo above is looking east from the corner of Hollywood Blvd and Highland Ave.

I have a celebrity homes tour on the GoCard and decided to try that today as the weather is supposed to be warmer, upper 70's (I think it hit 80).

I snapped a picture of the first home, then realized I would never remember which celebrity went with which home, plus most are hidden by hedges and trees anyways. So I just enjoyed the ride and took a few I could make sure I remembered.



Mulholland road was built in the 1920s "to take Angelinos from the city to the ocean." From parkway vista points you can see panoramas of the city, mountains and beaches, or hike trails into pockets of wilderness hidden in the canyons. Mulholland Scenic Corridor runs approximately 50 miles from Griffith Park to Leo Carrillo State Beach, and links city, county, state, and federal parks within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

This was the only stop on the tour

In Search of Eldorado

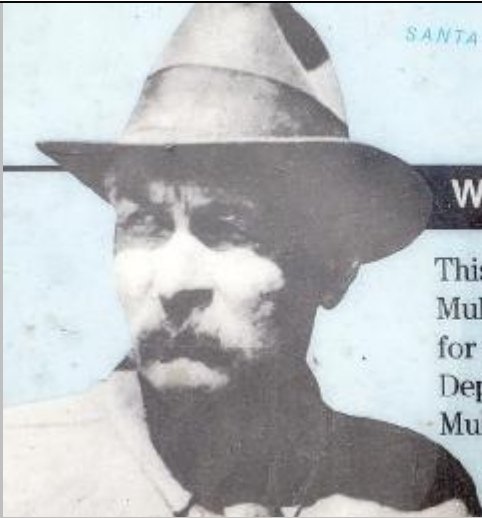
By Edgar Allan Poe

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!'



William Mulholland

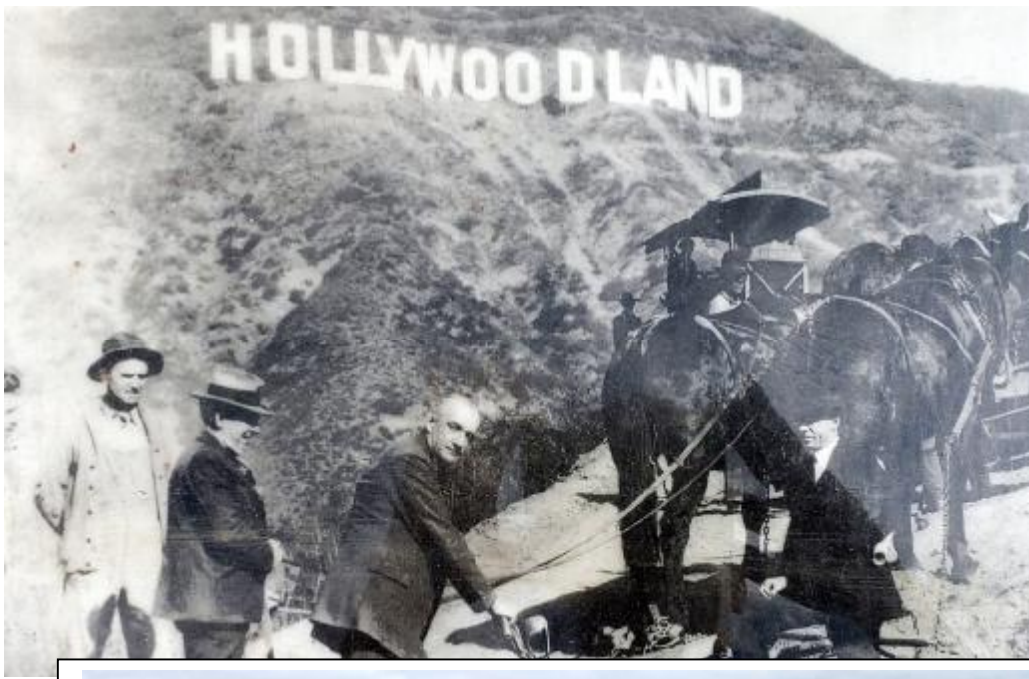
This road was named for William Mulholland, former chief engineer for the Los Angeles City Water Department. As early as 1913, Mulholland promoted the concept

of a scenic highway to make the mountains accessible to the people of Los Angeles.

The Sign and the City

Like many chapters in the history of Los Angeles, the Hollywood sign began as a real estate promotion. A gigantic billboard was commissioned in 1923 to promote the development called "Hollywoodland." Mules hauled telegraph poles, sheet metal, and 4,000 light bulbs up the side of Mount Lee to create the sign.

Several years later, a landslide destroyed the last four letters. Time and weather ravaged the rest of the sign, until the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce started the "Save the Sign" campaign in 1978. Patrons paid \$27,700 per letter to rebuild the sign, now an internationally known landmark.

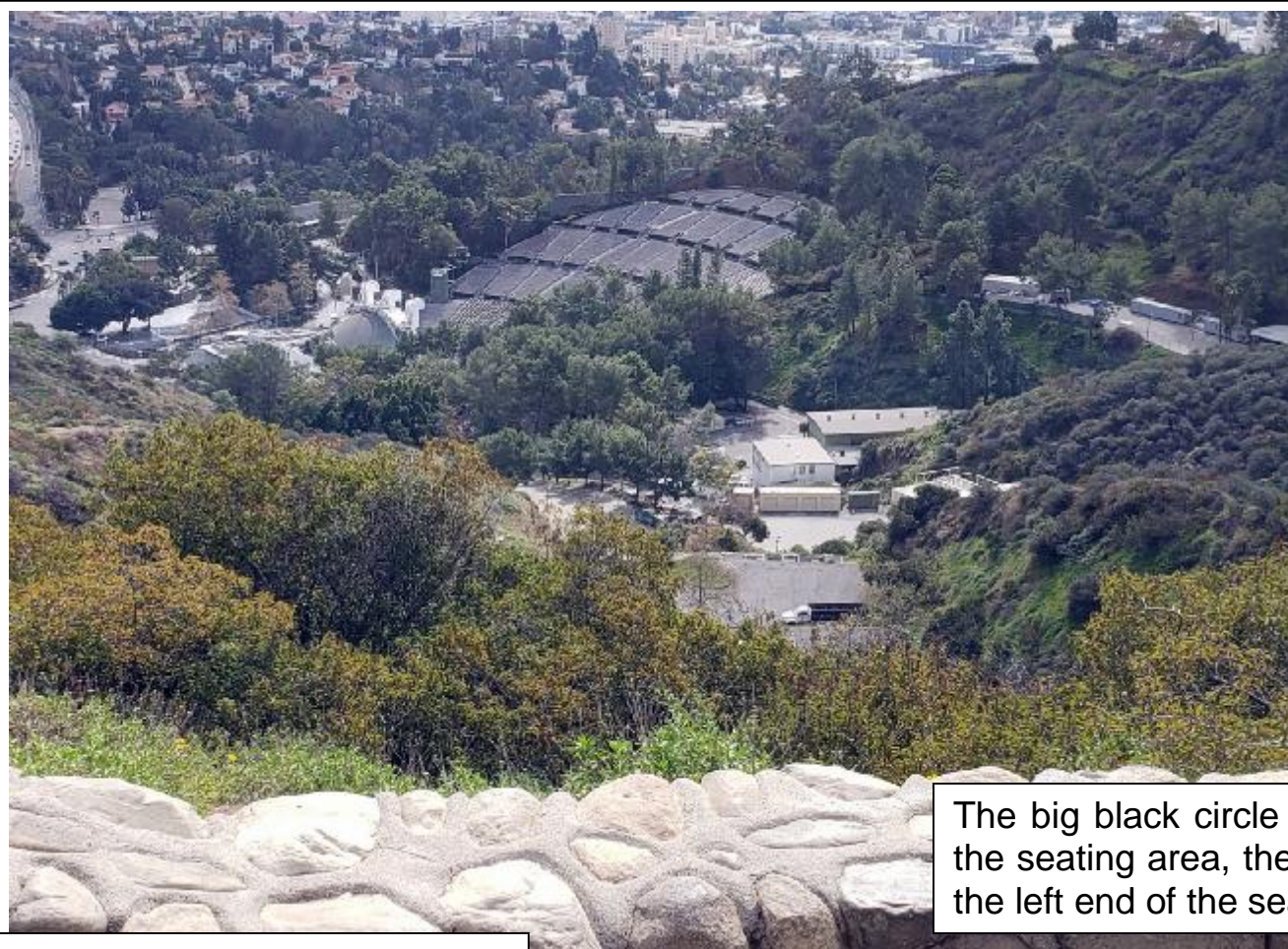


I will get closer in the weeks ahead

The Hollywood Bowl

- The Hollywood Bowl is an outdoor concert amphitheater, seating 18,000 people on grounds totalling 110 acres. Hollywood's Theatre Arts Alliance purchased the land in 1919 to create a park and arts center.

Permanent seating was installed on the graded hillside in 1926. Since then the Bowl has grown from a community arts center to a world-famous performance site.



The big black circle you see is the seating area, the Bowl is at the left end of the seats.

Wilt "The Stilt" had this home custom built in 1971. 7158 square feet designed without a single right angled corner, and required five freight car loads of redwood and 16 tons of Bouquet Canyon Stone. Obviously this photo does not do it justice. After taking the photos above of downtown, the sign and the bowl, I turned and looked UP to take this picture. You really should go online and check out the photos, this place is incredible.





Above - If anyone ever saw LETHAL WEAPON II, this is the rotten Diplomats house which gets pulled down the hill.

Below – This is the place Michael Jackson was renting, for \$100,000.00 a month, when he died. In the next two photos you can see the balcony (where he would sometimes wave to the tours) and the entry gate we are parked next to. I didn't take a picture, but Elvis owned the place across the street. MJ was a big fan of Elvis and always wanted to be close to him.





**NO
TRESPASSING**

THIS PROPERTY IS
PROTECTED BY
VIDEO CAMERAS
AND SENSORS

TRESPASSERS WILL
BE PROSECUTED



If you've ever watched the opening intro of THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES you might recognize this street. Jed, Jethro, Ellie May and Granny drove their jalopy down Canon Dr. There are more trees in Beverly Hills than there are residents.

I forgot to get a picture of the outside of the Dolby Theatre so this will have to do for now. That's an Oscar the theatre won. The Dolby has been hosting the Academy Awards since construction was complete in 2001, and it was designed specifically for that reason. Their current hosting contract goes through 2033.



I now you're supposed to smile for a selfie. This was my fourth attempt and I am no longer smiling.

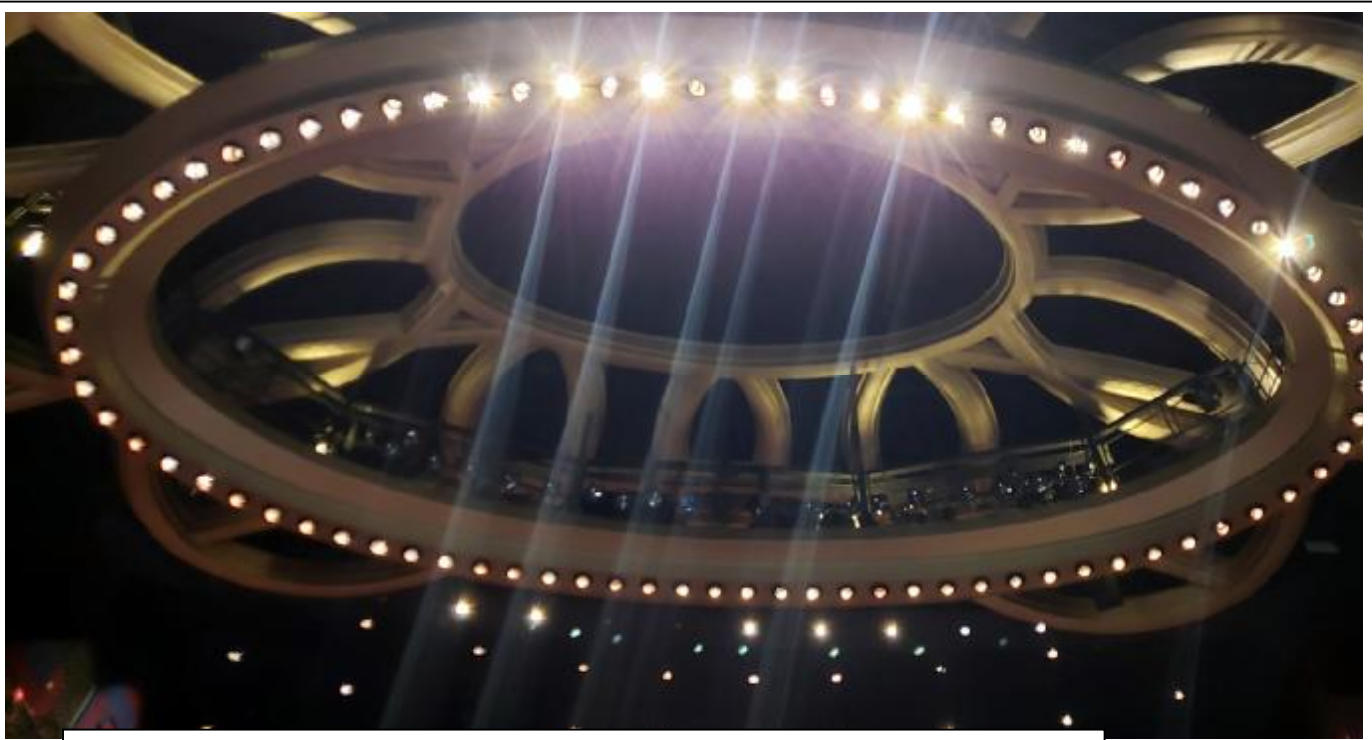


A very impressive venue

A view from the stage on Oscar night, 2018. I was sitting right here for the selfie. They shut down Hollywood Blvd for the week prior to the broadcast to get everything ready.



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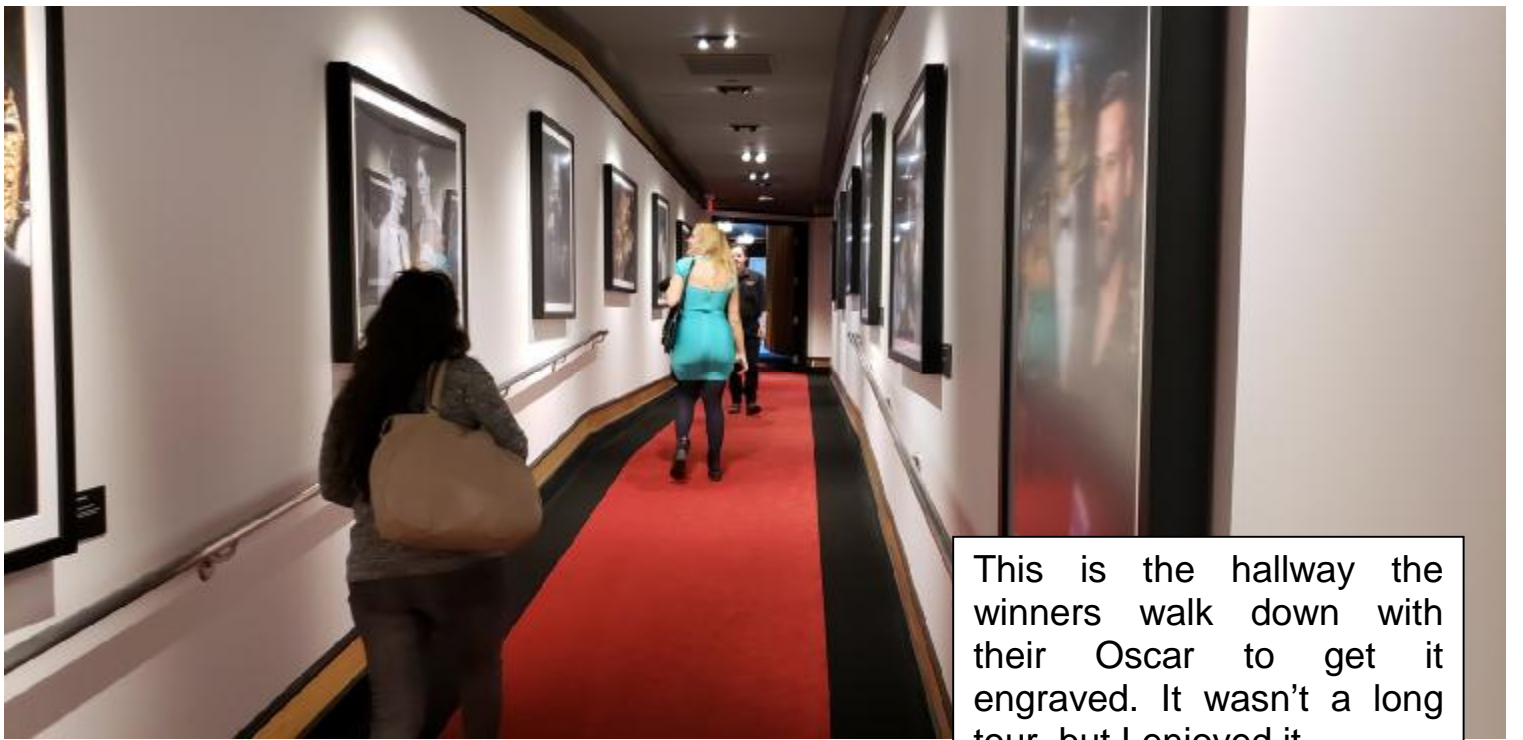


The ceiling centerpiece. In 2002 Whoopie Goldberg was lower from there on a trapeze to start the show.

Don't ask me why I didn't notice this was out of focus when I took it, maybe I was just in a hurry.

Below is the view from Box 14. The bottom photo must be a good one. I asked the tour guide to take the shot. Suddenly, everyone on the tour had to have the same shot. I started a trend.





This is the hallway the winners walk down with their Oscar to get it engraved. It wasn't a long tour, but I enjoyed it.

I had an hour to kill before my Chinese Theatre tour so I took a stroll.

Note the elephant statue on top of the mall. I had no research on this so I just looked it up. The Dolby was built on the site of the former Kodak Theatre, which hosted the Oscars back in the early days. The elephants are a tribute to the 1916 movie *INTOLERANCE* (an unbelievable 210 minutes long, a silent movie remember).





From findinglostangeles.com: The Hollywood Center Motel. Today, the tired motor court sits like an old movie prop along Sunset Boulevard, cast aside after playing a part in movies like *L.A. Confidential*. But the history of this decaying motel, tucked away behind a worn breezeblock wall, is no less interesting.

We believe the property once existed as a ranch until some time between 1922 and 1932 when the motel's 23 units were built. From this time until at least the 1940s, it operated as a motel, welcoming visitors to its prime location just a few blocks away from the bustling theaters along Hollywood Boulevard.

By the mid-1950s, the business presumably operated as both a motel and long-term residence. One of the permanent guests, Mrs. Caroline Halberstadt, lived at the Hollywood Center Motel for at least part of the 1950s until her death in 1959 at the age of 106.

In 1963, an armed robber broke into the motel and stole \$180 from Dorothea, and left her with a chilling request: After ordering her to hand over money from the cash drawer, the suspect told her to get in bed and tucked her in. "Be a good girl and give me a kiss," he said. She complied and he left.

Affectionately called "Mom" by the motel's patrons, Dorothea continued to manage the Motel when eventually it became a hub of all things sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll.

Michele Ann Grey, a sex worker sharing a room at the Motel with three other guests, went out around 10:00 p.m. on November 28, 1976 to try and earn money for rent. Her body was found in a vacant lot near Chinatown the next morning.

The Hollywood Center Motel reached its low point in the fall of 1986. A man checked in to room 304, paid cash for about a two month stay, and asked that no one enter his room—a strange request by average hotel standards, but not at the Hollywood Center Motel. One unsuspecting maid didn't get the "no-entry" memo, and entered the room only to find an overwhelming smell coming from a large trunk in the closet. When LAPD detectives arrived in the afternoon of October 18, 1986, they opened the trunk and found the decomposing body of 20-year old Richard Mayer, dressed in nothing but a clear plastic raincoat and wrapped in two trash bags. Mayer had been drawn to the gritty rock star lifestyle that buzzed around the Motel, and worked as a roadie for some of the bands that passed through. Mayer's murder remains unsolved to this day.

The Hollywood Center Motel is used as the scene of a fictional murder in the 1997 film *L.A. Confidential*.

Continued below...

Today, slowly decaying behind the breezeblock walls along Sunset Boulevard, the Hollywood Center Motel still stands, largely untouched, unkempt, and overgrown. The age and patina make it look more like something a talented set designer would have constructed in a Hollywood backlot for a '40s noir film, rather than actually operating as a motel. The property no doubt invites speculation—a newer model Mercedes Benz and other nice cars sit idly in the Hotel's parking lot; a man quickly enters and locks the main gate behind himself before scurrying around the property, seemingly tending to nothing. Who is he? Who do these nice cars belong to? What goes on behind these sordid walls?

Time will only tell whether this small motel, with such a dark and complicated past, will ever be restored and reopened, or simply demolished to make way for something new. No matter the outcome, let's just hope that the Motel's role as a backdrop for murder remains on the big screen.



From findinglostangeles.com: The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences held its first annual Emmy Awards on January 25, 1949 at the Hollywood Athletic Club. The Hollywood Athletic Club's name itself tends to obscure its many uses, as well as the star power behind its founding. The HAC opened on New Year's Eve of 1924, founded by Charlie Chaplin, Cecil B. DeMille, and Rudolph Valentino. In true Hollywood fashion, the high-rise tower and accompanying bungalows were designed by Meyer & Holler, the architectural firm responsible for Sid Grauman's Chinese Theater and Egyptian Theater on Hollywood Boulevard. The HAC instantly became a one-stop shop for Hollywood royalty to exercise, eat, drink, sunbathe, play, rest, and socialize. In addition to its famous founders, the Club counted Groucho Marx, John Barrymore, Mae West, Joan Crawford, Jean Harlow, Clark Gable, and many others among its members.

Since the 1940s, the HAC has gone through several phases, at one point housing the University of Judaism, and eventually becoming a hotspot for celebrity nightlife in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. Today, the HAC serves as office space as well as a private event venue.



The lobby



Above is the ceiling in the theater. Keep in mind this place was built in 1927. It's been refurbished recently but most things are original. In 2013 there was a major undertaking in which the floor was lowered 30 feet into the ground and an IMAX screen installed.



Just in case you're wondering, no, I'm not a fashionista. I have always had a crush on Grace Kelly.

I think that, with the exception of the dress, the TCL Chinese Theater tour was a bust (no pun intended). Nowhere near as good as the Dolby, and it cost more money too.



Look who I ran into, Morgan Freeman. We had a good discussion about.....Not really....My next visit is to Madame Tussauds Hollywood Wax Museum. As far as I can recall, my last wax museum visit was in London in the 70's and it was nothing like this one.

Julia and I ready for a night on the town. Right!





Audrey Hepburn is another one of my favorites. Audrey or Grace, either one.







Let me show you how it's done Steve, gimme that megaphone.

A box a WHAT?





Spock,
who's the
REAL
Captain?



I think Jennifer
Lawrence and
Morgan
Freeman were
the most life-
like.

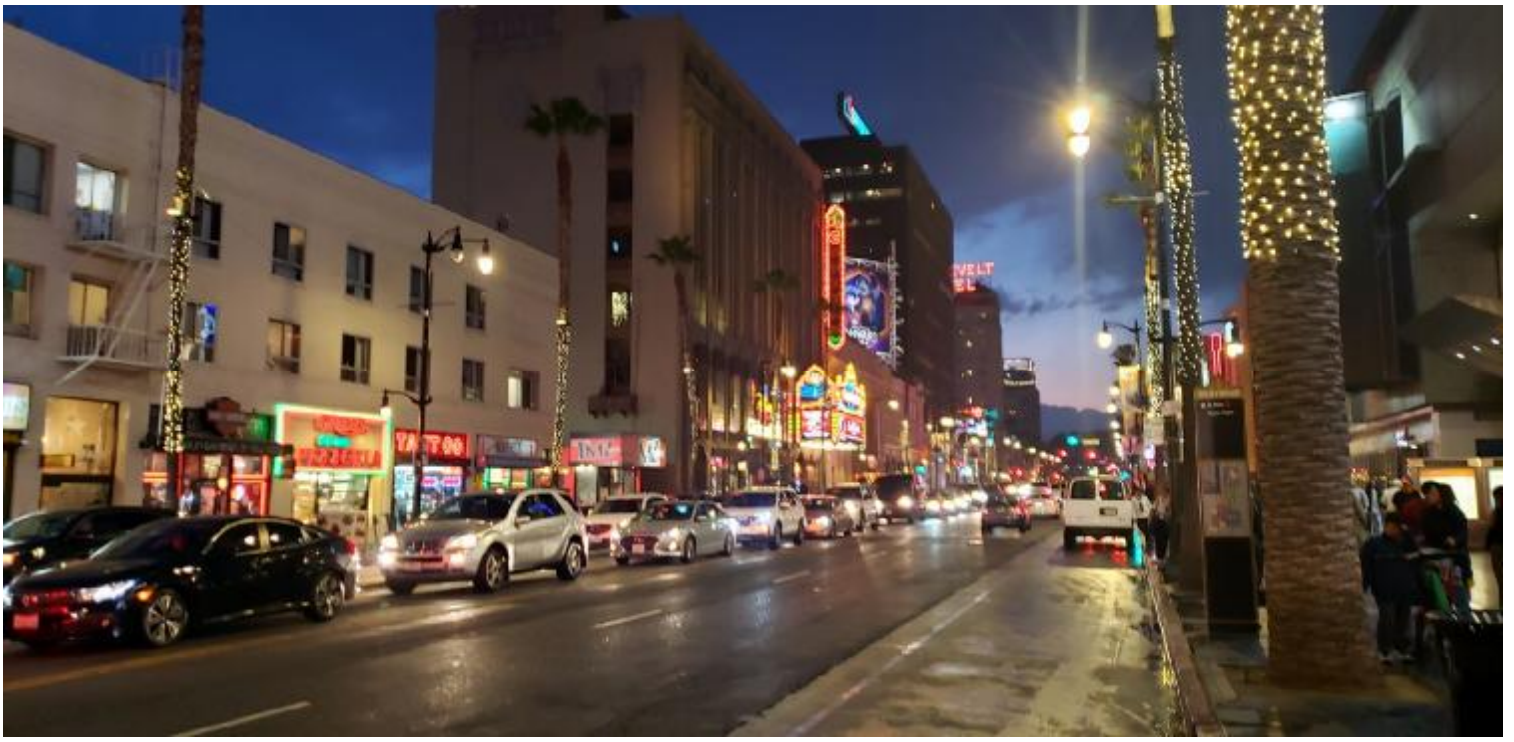




- A sitting with a celebrity takes two hours, in order to take measurements, photos, costume donation, hand cast, hair samples, eye color matching and a signature
- Upwards of 250 precise measurements of the subject's head and body are taken to give Madame Tussauds' sculptors the information they need to accurately create a wax figure. The subject stands in pose on a turntable and 180 photographs are taken of the celebrity from every angle with different lenses and lighting
- All celebrities' vital statistics are kept confidential – despite repeated requests from the public and media



This...was fascinating. The most fun I had all day. The London wax museum was a sideshow I think, of the original Madame Tussauds, of just horror or famous London slayings like Jack the Ripper and so on. They were life size, but in diorama like settings that you could not go near. These you can touch and interact with; they're just standing in the middle of the floor. I seriously thought Morgan Freeman was a person with a mask at first because it was so real and standing right there right as you get off the elevator. There were many more, mostly for the younger crowd, like Justin Timberlake, Jennifer Lopez, Beyonce, Britney Spears, and so on.



Above is Hollywood Blvd looking west.

I'm a day behind again.

I've lost track of where I parked the last couple nights. I know that down the street from the police station didn't work a couple days ago, all the parking was angled and not parallel. I would've stuck out like a sore thumb.

I spent one night, somewhere on the street. As I was having breakfast there was a knock on the door. Seems I was partially blocking their driveway. I had forty feet in front of me so I just pulled forward. I couldn't tell in the dark, I thought I was in a good spot. I'm glad her husband didn't leave for work at 5 a.m.

It's getting a little tougher. I don't want to go all the way out to the ocean every night and have to spend a lot of time fighting traffic to get where I'm going the next day, so I try and edge in that direction, but also try and keep it safe. The homeless population in LA is quite a problem. The parking regulations in LA are quite a problem. Finding a parking space in LA is quite a problem.

Until next time.....