



In Search of Eldorado

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



Hello to Family & Friends

Today is Griffith Park, the largest city park in North America and five times larger than Central Park in New York City.

The only problem I have with the park is that if you enter it from the north, which I am, you have to drive all the way through on the east side then out of the park south, go west, then drive back into the park to see more sights. Traffic in the park is very light, but getting out and back in on the south side is quite the hassle.

What was really strange was that I pulled over by the Greek Theater to use the internet on my phone. But I couldn't get any connection, and I'm only six miles from downtown L.A.

Anyways, I finally found out that parking at the Autry Museum is free. I also found out the free shuttle only runs on weekends. Bummer. Now I'll have to drive to visit the sights.

First stop is the Autry Museum of the American West. I'm hoping for something similar to the National Cowboy Museum in Oklahoma City, I really enjoyed that one and want to go back.

Oh oh. When I pulled into the lot, well before opening time, four school buses pulled in right behind me and disgorged hordes of school kids. This might be a noisy visit.

I still hadn't realized the camera setting yet, so please bear with the very light photos. I even had to delete a couple that I couldn't darken up enough to read.

Day 54
Tuesday,
February 25th

Griffith Park

Weather
50's to 70'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!'

AUTRY MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN WEST

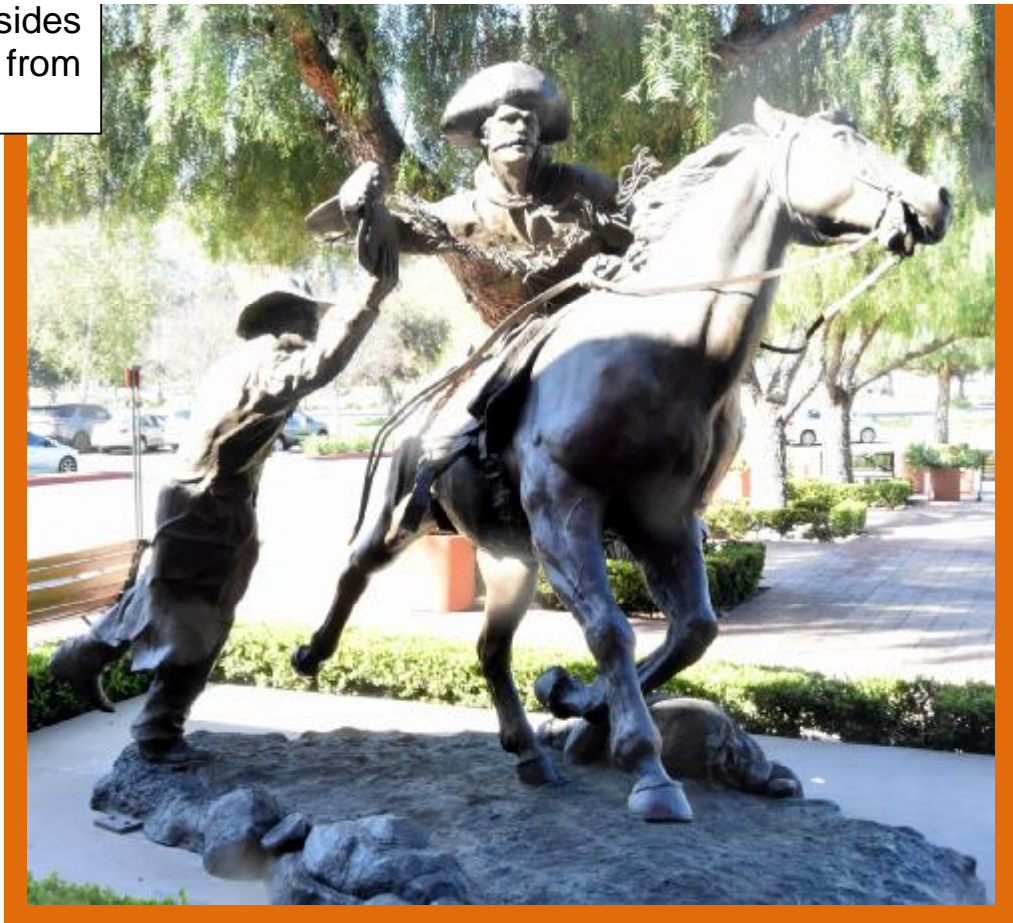
These statues were in the courtyard while waiting for 10:00.

The Pony Express was an ultrafast but short-lived mail service that ran between the East and West from 1860 to 1861. The roughly 1,900-mile route began in Missouri and passed through Wyoming and Utah before crossing the Sierra Nevada mountain range to reach its destination in Sacramento. Riders exchanged horses at more than 180 stations during this journey, which took between nine and ten days, and for which they were paid around \$25 a week (compared to the going rate of \$1 a week for skilled labor).

Special Delivery depicts the critical moment when Pony Express riders carried Abraham Lincoln's inaugural address from a telegraph station in Nebraska to newspapers in California in the record time of seven days and seventeen hours. Although it lasted only eighteen months, the image of the Pony Express lingers to this day as a symbol of the daring enterprise that many consider emblematic of the Western spirit.



I felt I had to show you both sides of it, you can't see the faces from the other side.



Gene Autry himself



Hi Oh Silver, away!!!



Don't worry, there will always be more John Wayne.

Museum Founder Gene Autry

(1907-1998)

Gene Autry was a legendary recording artist and movie star whose career spanned some 60 years in the entertainment industry. Gene appeared in 93 feature films and made 635 recordings, more than 300 of which he wrote or co-wrote. In addition to his movie and recording success, between 1940 and 1956 his radio show *Gene Autry's Melody Ranch* was broadcast weekly over the CBS Radio Network. He became known as "America's Favorite Singing Cowboy."

With the opening of the Autry Museum in 1988, he realized his dream to build a museum that would exhibit and interpret the history and heritage of the West. In his ability to transcend media and in the sheer scope of his output, Gene Autry is unsurpassed as a popular imagemaker of the American West.

Visit the Official Gene Autry website at www.geneautry.com for more information.



Gene Autry Collection Photos courtesy of the Gene Autry Foundation and The Autry Foundation

The chuckwagon



THE COWBOY ON THE TRAIL

In 1871 alone, cowboys moved 600,000-700,000 cattle north from Texas. Crews moved herds at 10 to 16 miles per day. Drives needed roughly one man per 250-350 head of cattle.



"Los Angeles"—pattern bar
Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company

Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company, a leading manufacturer of saloon and restaurant fixtures built this bar. Catalogued as the "Los Angeles" pattern, this bar served the town of Wibaux Montana, for nearly a century. Carved female nudes were not commonly used, but they remind us that saloons, for the most part, catered to men.

I ate lunch in the Autry parking lot then headed over to Travel Town. This is where I had to delete the photo of the sign – it was pretty much just white. I had to bypass the Live Steamers Railroad Museum because it's run by volunteers, and they only show up on the weekends. Too bad because there looked to be lots of interesting stuff to see. On to the Travel Town Museum.



A zoo wagon for Leopards



Most of the rolling stock was in pretty rough shape, but then this engine caught my eye.



I took a ride on the 1/4 scale train, much like the County Zoo ride back home.



The legendary railroad engineer, Casey Jones, was killed in a railroad accident on April 30, 1900 in Vaughan, Mississippi. He is credited with saving the lives of all the passengers and crew members on board his passenger train the night of the accident. Following the accident, it was reported that his body was discovered with one hand on the airbrake lever and one hand on the train whistle cord; it is believed that he died trying to warn crew and passengers of the impending collision with the train whistle as he struggled to slow the train down before impact. Casey Jones is memorialized by folk song artists and popular alternative rock bands like the Grateful Dead.

Next is the Old Zoo. It wasn't the easiest to find, but I did, and it was....eerily interesting. There are no signs of what animals were in which cages/pens/enclosures. I was surprised to see the lengths the zookeepers had to go through to feed the animals.

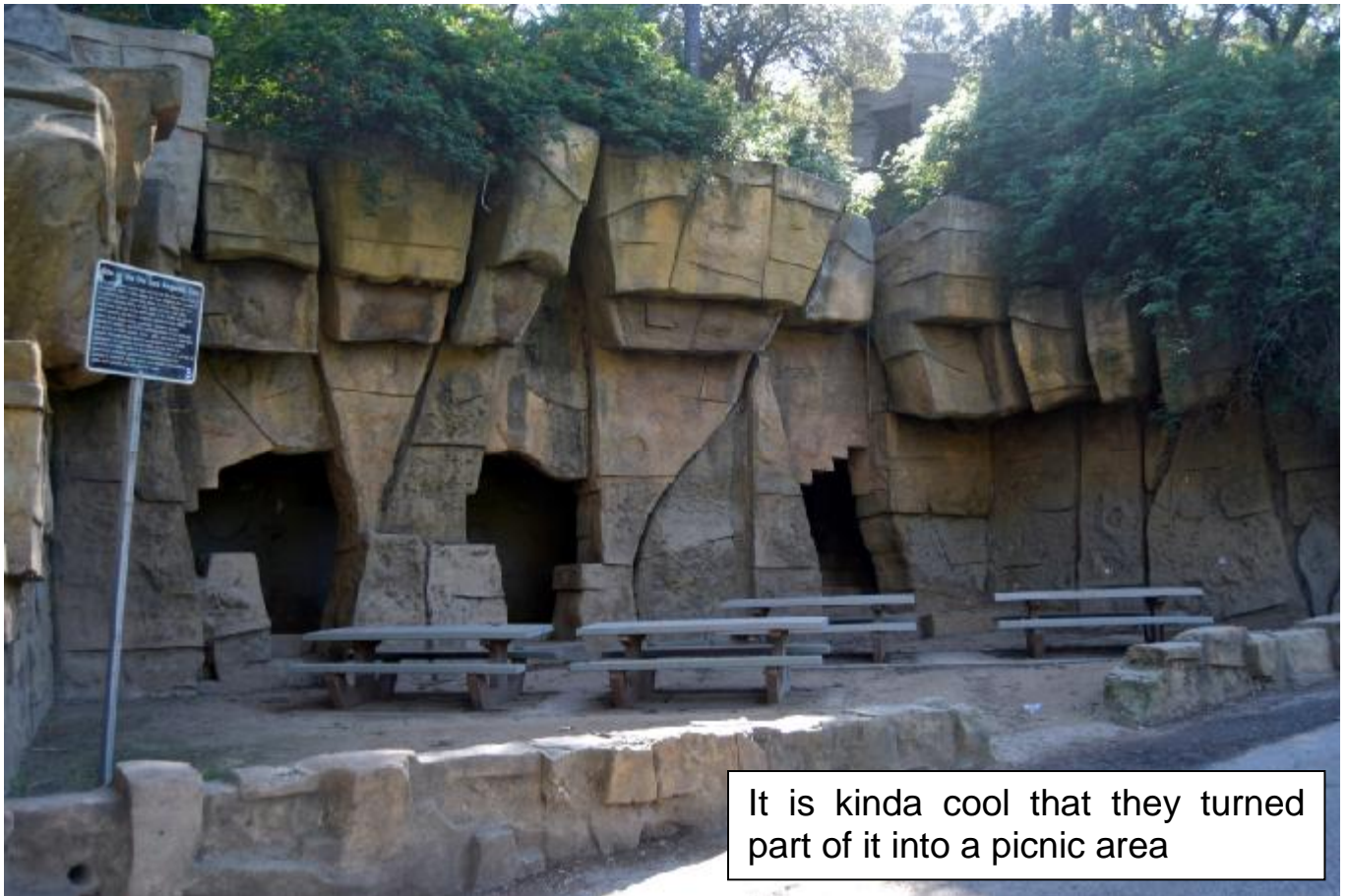
Site of the Old Los Angeles Zoo

This Griffith Park canyon area served as the City's Zoo from its founding in 1912 to 1965, when the Los Angeles Zoo moved to its current location about two miles north of where you are currently standing. Many of the walls, grottos, and other enclosures you see today were built in the 1930s by County Relief workers and Works Progress Administration (WPA) crews. Once, bears, lions, monkeys, macaws, goats, elephants, reptiles, and turtles, among others, lived here and the sounds of their growls, roars, calls, and clamor filled this canyon. Although these historic enclosures are no longer appropriate for housing animals, they can be home to memories of family visits to the Griffith Park Zoo, as well as an opportunity to better understand developments in the zoological sciences. Please enjoy and respect the buildings, walls, and habitats you will discover today.

Seems like Bogie must have liked Stage 28

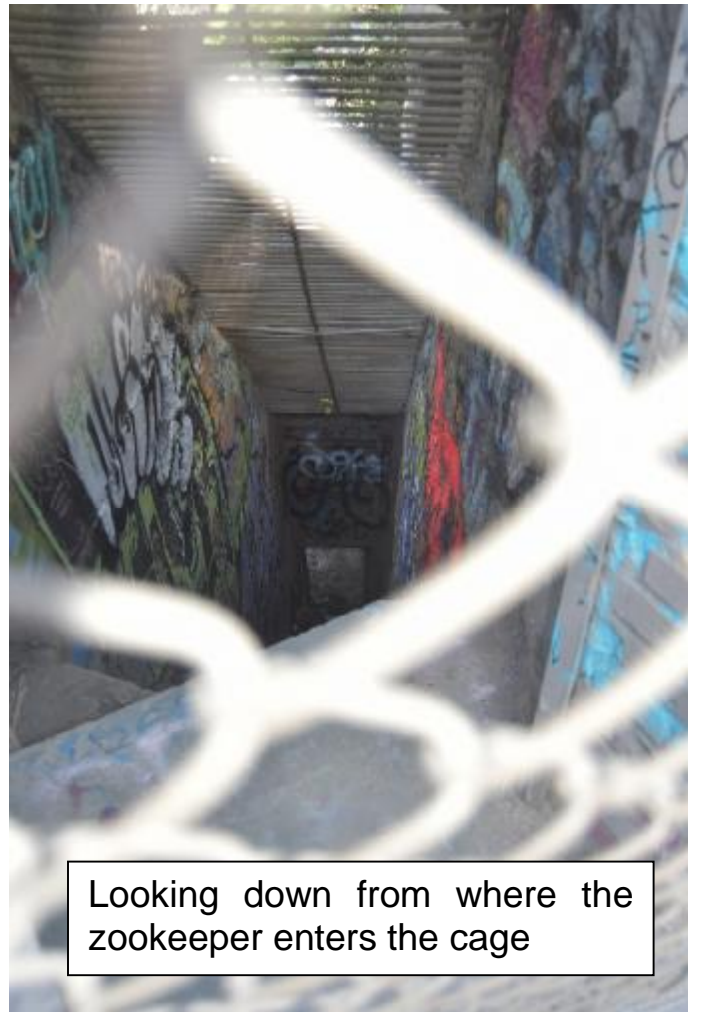


As I walked along my imagination did produce the roar of a lion and the chattering of the monkeys, but if I had memories of visiting this old zoo when it was active, I would rather keep those than create new ones with abandoned and graffiti painted cages.



It is kinda cool that they turned part of it into a picnic area

Looking up from inside the enclosure



Looking down from where the zookeeper enters the cage





These all involved a little bit of a hike in which I came across three guys. I wasn't sure what they were doing at first, but it appeared they were trying to film a scene for something they were filming. I felt a little like I was intruding so I just passed by, twice, because I had to turn around and go back.



Bronson Canyon		Sign No. 94
→	Bronson Caves	.2 mi
↑	Brush Canyon Trailhead	100 yds
	Hollywood Sign Hollyridge Trail Viewing Area	1.9 mi
	Hollywood Sign Tyrolian Tank Viewing Area	2.3 mi

This is Bronson Cave or Canyon, which took its name from the street from which it is accessed (this street also inspired Charles Buchinsky to change his name to Charles Bronson). Just a couple titles here: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *The Lone Ranger* (1956), *The Searchers* and *Star Trek VI*. The list is long. For TV how about *Bonanza*, *Gunsmoke*, *Little House on the Prairie*, all of the *Star Trek* series and....the Bat cave entrance for the 60's version of *Batman*. Once again Michael Connelly's ninth Bosch book *Lost Light*.



As I exited the tunnel on the other side (it's manmade and only 50-60 yards long I found this circle maze. But then I turned around.



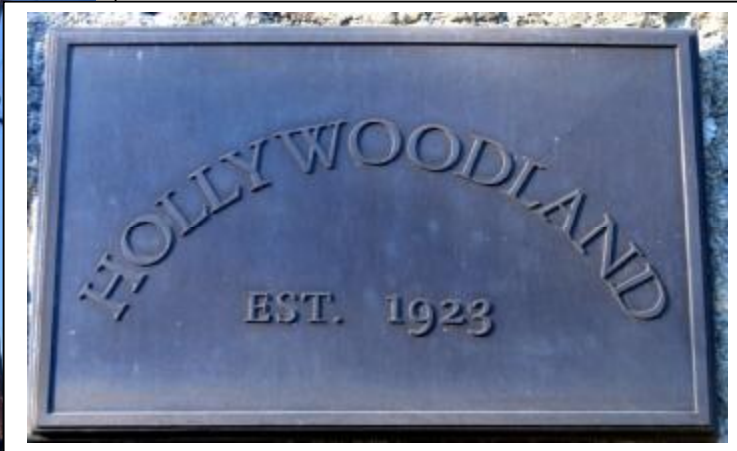
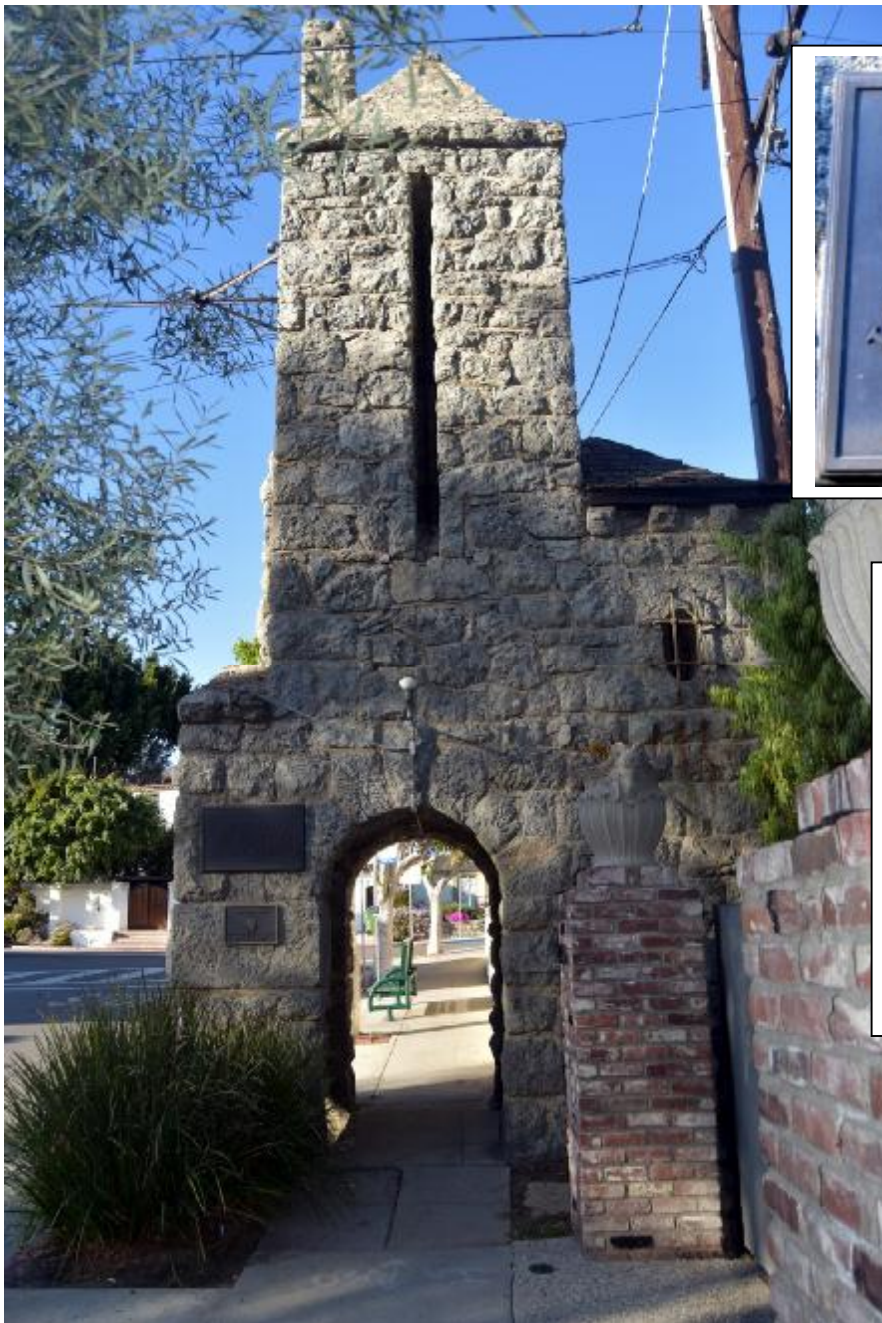
I keep getting a little closer to that sign

Since I was on the south end of Griffith Park and it was still early I decided to hit some of the sights I picked in this area. Unfortunately, Google maps does not realize I drive a 26 foot long RV. As I made my way to an intersection I found the road ahead closed and turned right. Google must have thought I was on a motorcycle.....

...and it would have been really fun to have one and stop wherever you want and check out the scenery or grab a picture. But the walls and houses were two feet from my right side and the parked cars were two feet from my left side. Curving, mountainous, narrow, roads. I made a truck back up once and had close calls with several others.



I'm sure they had more than one pair of glasses for Harry.





Remember the Hollywood sign used to be Hollywoodland and was installed by a realty company? Well, here they are. The stone gates were the original entrance to Hollywoodland.

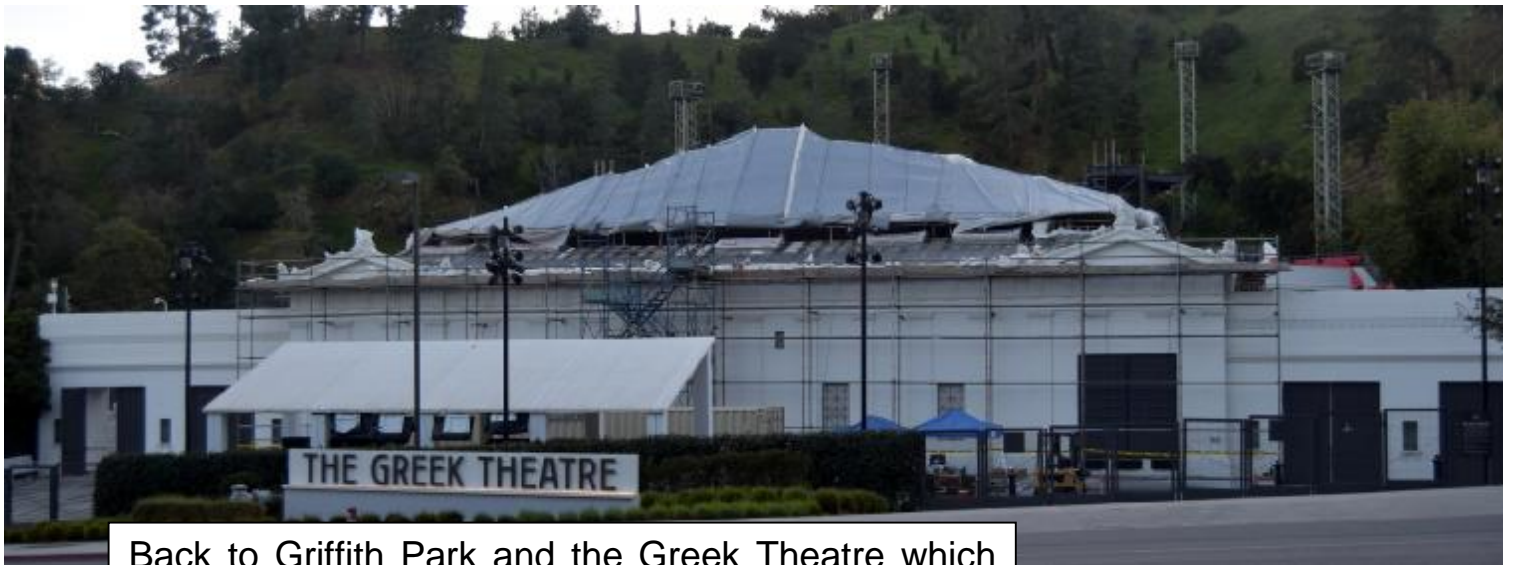


The Hollywood Tower Apartments, said to be one of the inspirations for Disney's Hollywood Tower Hotel ride.





The Snow White Cottages, so named because of their proximity to Disney's Hyperion Ave studio back in 1929. Several Disney employees lived here and could walk to work. I don't really see it, maybe back when they had real thatched roofs it might have been different.



Back to Griffith Park and the Greek Theatre which seems to be in a state of remodel right now. Since it's an open air theatre they don't start live productions until May.



Above is the Mt Hollywood Tunnel. This may look familiar to you also. If you ever saw *Back to the Future II*, this is where Marty, on the hoverboard, chases down Biff in his convertible. Or maybe you've seen *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*? This tunnel is the entrance to Toon Town.

I drove up to the Observatory, but parking was full and I wasn't about to walk up a mountain to see a crowd of people, so I headed south into Los Feliz and another Pavilion grocery store parking lot.

I did some shopping, I did some writing, I debated moving to another spot, I decided to stay put and I went to bed.

Until next time.....