



In Search of Eldorado

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



Hello to Family & Friends

Busy day ahead. Hopped in to take a quick shower and no hot water. Great. The water heater button is flashing. A quick look on the web tells me the unit is decalcifying. In order to get hot water back I have to run the water for 15 minutes, then turn the unit off (the switch is on the exterior of the RV), then turn the hot water back on. Naturally (ha, ha), I am reading all of this while I am standing naked in the bathroom.

I was able to get enough hot water to get wet, but I was out of luck when it came to rinsing off. YOWSA, that was chilly.

The water problems delayed my departure to Coronado Island, where I parked near the bike path and geared up.

Coronado Island is very bike friendly; is one of the most expensive places to live (more on that later); has the largest number of retired Admirals living on it; is home to the North Island Naval Air Station and the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base (S.E.A.L.S), neither of which allow tours; and is not really an island at all.

Back in the 1880's Coronado was uninhabited due to no fresh water. A group of investors founded the Coronado Beach Company, with the intent of making it a vacation wonderland. They installed a water pipeline across the bay, ferry service, roads, and built the Hotel del Coronado. Lots were auctioned off between \$500 and \$1600 for a total of \$350,000, which was, incidentally, the cost of the entire project.

Orange Blvd above is the main thoroughfare from east to west.

Day 37
Saturday,
February 8th

San Diego
Coronado
Island

Weather
50's to 60's and Sunny

In Search of Eldorado

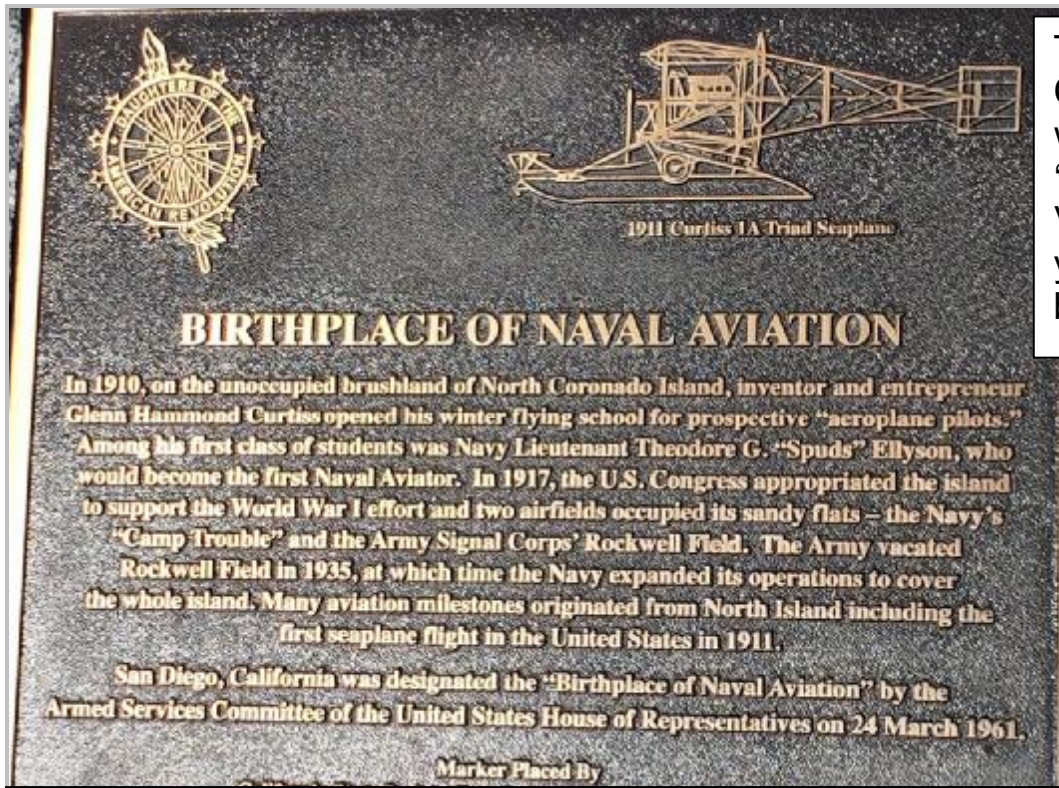
By Edgar Allan Poe

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!'



This plaque is in Centennial Park at what is called the 'San Diego Skyline Viewpoint'. I guess you can see why below.



The ferry landing is in the same park as above.

CORONADO FERRYBOAT TERMINAL

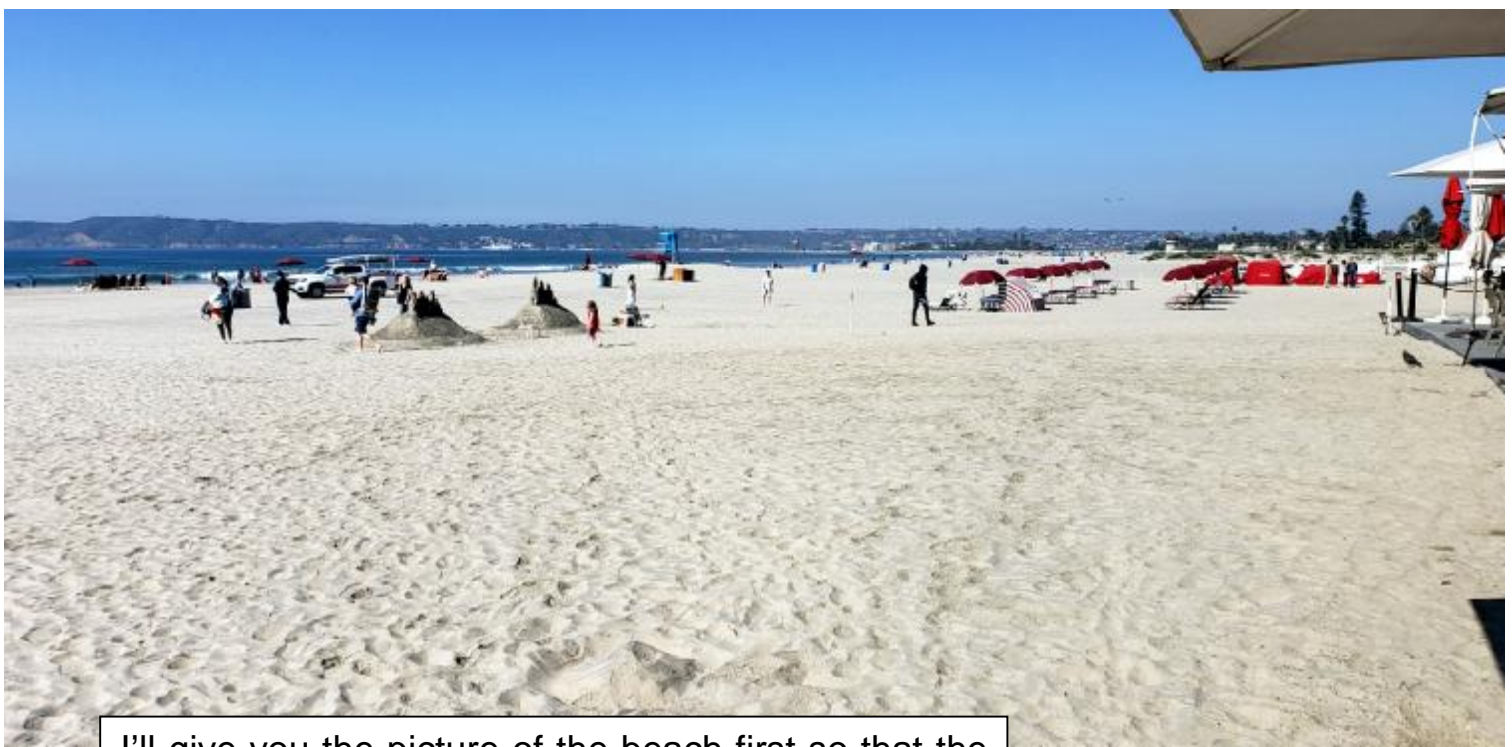
Original site of the Coronado Ferryboat Terminal which operated ferries between San Diego and Coronado from 1886 until the opening of the bridge in 1969. Equipped to accommodate passengers, horses and buggies, and later automobiles, the ferry system was a way of life for Coronadans. Upon cessation of the service the land was sold to private developers. Through the efforts of three residents, Patty Schmidt, Sally Kruppenacher, and Wendy Longley-Cook, this park was created. Opening in 1986, the 100th anniversary of Coronado's founding, it was named Centennial Park.



A look down Orange Blvd from east to west



I had such grand designs for my visit to this Hotel. It has appeared in twenty-three movies or TV shows since 1918, the most famous being *SOME LIKE IT HOT* in 1959 (a good year) with Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis and Marilyn Monroe, often voted the greatest comedy ever made.



I'll give you the picture of the beach first so that the comparison photos are together on the next page.

On the right is the promotional photo from the cover of the 'Architectural Gems' pamphlet I paid five bucks for at the visitor center. Below is the closest I could get due to the construction being done.



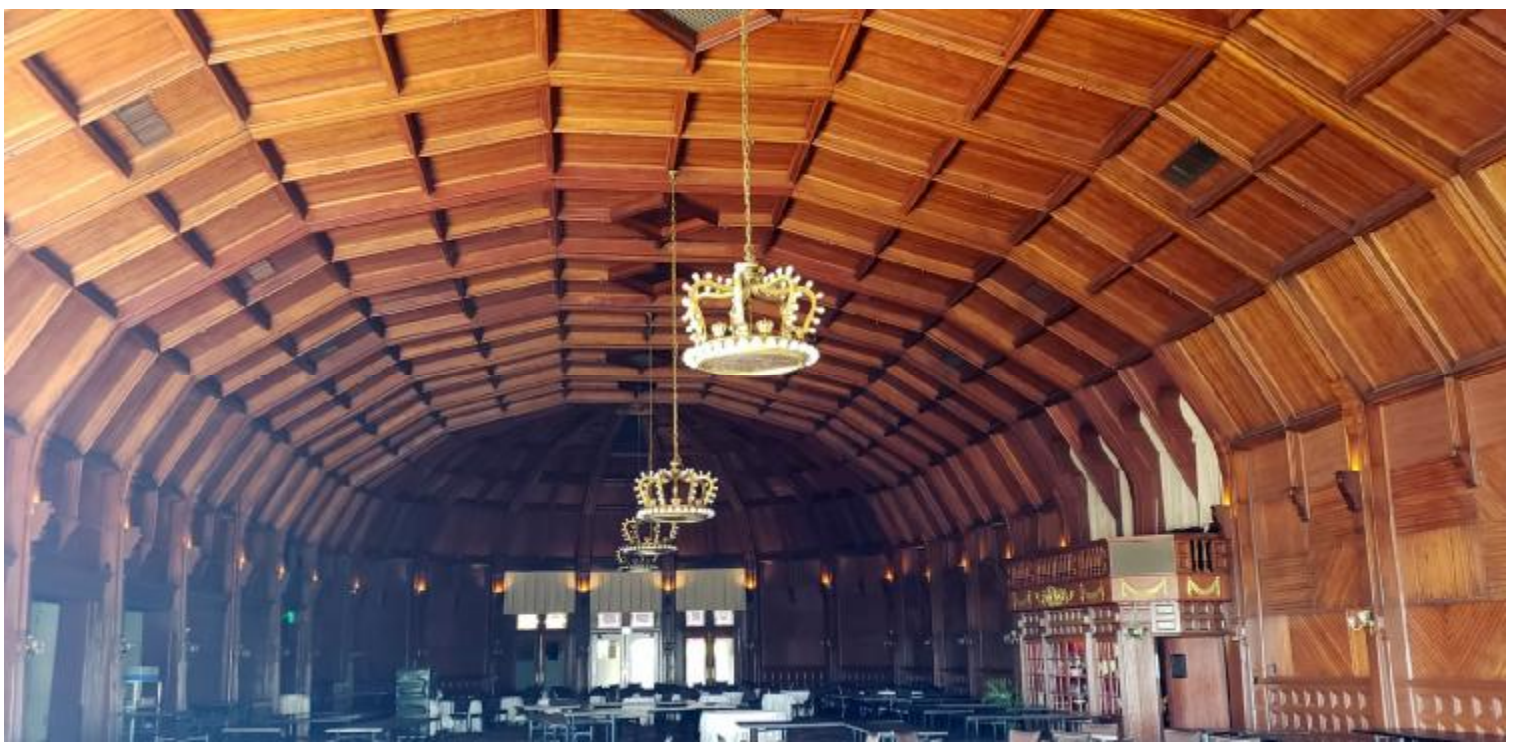
Now, it appeared to me as though they were building this structure, and I mentioned it to the bell captain in the lobby. "All complaints can be forwarded.." Never mind. "We are enhancing, not destroying the view."



It restores the historic sense of arrival
that the hotel began with.

After exploring a little, I came across this TV in the lobby with a whole message about how they were remodeling the hotel closer to its original design. I guess I'm not the only one who felt like it had been ruined.

CROWN ROOM



About all you can say here is, WOW! (don't get any ideas Morgan)

The entire building was built from Redwood brought south by barge from northern California.

HOTEL DEL CORONADO

Dragon Tree

Dracaena Draco

Native to the Canary Islands, this unusual tree was planted at The Del prior to the turn of the century where it thrives in our temperate southern California coastal climate.

The dragon tree was used as a backdrop in the Marilyn Monroe movie Some Like It Hot, which was filmed at The Del in 1958.



Getting back to the movie – Left is the bus with the band as it pulls up in front of the Hotel.

Below is the best I could do. Quite a few changes have taken place since 1959.



S.S. Monte Carlo

During the Depression, many "get-rich-quick" schemes prevailed. One such scheme was the *S.S. Monte Carlo*, a gambling ship docked three miles off Point Loma. Considered international waters, it was outside the jurisdiction of the police.

It was a rough trip out to the *S.S. Monte Carlo*, which was actually a converted freighter with a concrete hull and no engines. To board the ship, a small shore boat took the gamblers to a gangplank and the only way back was to wait for the next boat to shore. On New Year's Eve 1936, after the guests had left, a gale hit the coast and grounded the *S.S. Monte Carlo*. The rumor that whisky bottles were among the wreckage prompted many to brave the surf the next morning.

The Monte Carlo only appears at very low tides, which this morning is not. But the sign below indicates an 'underwater obstruction', so I assume this is the correct place to find what's left of the gambling ship.



I headed down the Silver Strand about four miles to the Loews Coronado Bay Resort where I ate lunch on a bench and watched about ten sailboats sail by. Then I rode back to the main drag, locked up the bike, and walked up and down Orange Blvd. I looked in some of the shops, had a frozen yogurt and bought a pair of water shoes. I mentioned real estate earlier? Here's a listing. Yup, you're reading that right, 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 1330 SF for \$2.35 million. Just imagine what the twenty-three room mansions go for. Seven bedrooms will run you about \$5 million.

Next is a ride down to the beach, commonly picked as one of the best beaches in America.

2 beds / 2 baths / 1,330 SF

1810 AVENIDA DEL MUNDO UNIT 1207
CORONADO, CA

\$2,350,000

Upgraded luxury in this custom remodeled ocean front corner unit in El Encanto Panoramic skyline ocean views to Pt. Loma and to downtown San Diego. Rustic Modern defines the look and feel of this immaculate space while an enclosed patio with multi-slide door system transforms your home into an outdoor living room. Limestone accent wall and floor, recessed lighting soffit with up and down LED lighting, and soft-close kitchen cabinets w/ recessed outlets are just some of the many designer touches.



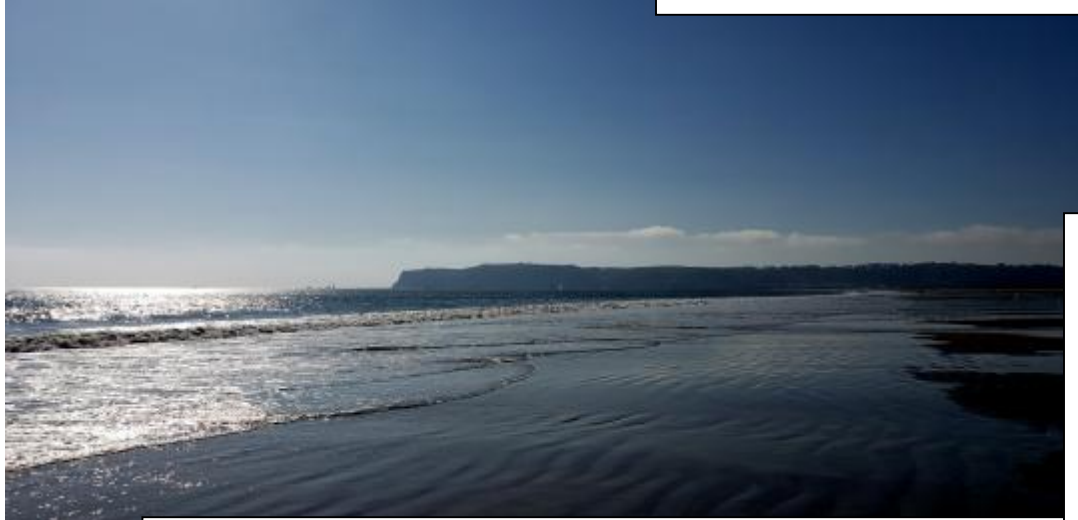
The beach was very dog friendly today. There must have been over 30 dogs romping around together, chasing balls into the surf, coming up to say hi. (and not a bikini in sight – too cold)



One of the things the beach is famous for is the tiny flecks of Mica in the sand which give it a sparkling look when the sun hits it the right way.



It was a little strange seeing a poodle romping in the surf



Left is looking north at Cabrillo Point, tomorrow's destination.



Below is looking south at the Hotel del Coronado.

Using the pamphlet I bought at the VC, I started my tour of the interesting houses on Coronado Island. There are 65 of them listed, but you're only going to see a few. I heard that sigh of relief. There are some that are interesting architecturally, some historically, and some with an interesting story. Those are the ones below.



Built in 1915 by a retired capitalist, I liked the look of this one, the different textures.

Built by a Rear Admiral in 1911, looks like it's getting a makeover. That's good because I think it's kinda ugly.



This one was NOT on the list, but I thought it was interestingly different.

Built in 1919 for the president of the Calumet Baking Company, George Rew. We probably all have a can of Calumet Baking Powder in the kitchen.



Above – Built in 1924 for a furniture manufacturer from Michigan.

Left – Built in 1887 in San Diego, it was moved here via barge in 1985 and is affectionately nicknamed the 'baby del' for its similar architecture to the hotel.



Built in 1926 for the Mann's, first women's clothing store in San Diego. Enlarged, remodeled, remodeled, enlarged, probably very different from the original.



I always liked Tudor style homes. Built in 1914 for a Nebraska rancher, 40 rooms, 27 bedrooms, 13 bathrooms, a pool, a waterfall, asking \$25 million.



Built in 1895, it has been dubbed the 'Wizard of Oz' house since the early 1900's because L. Frank Baum wrote four of his Oz books while spending the winters here.

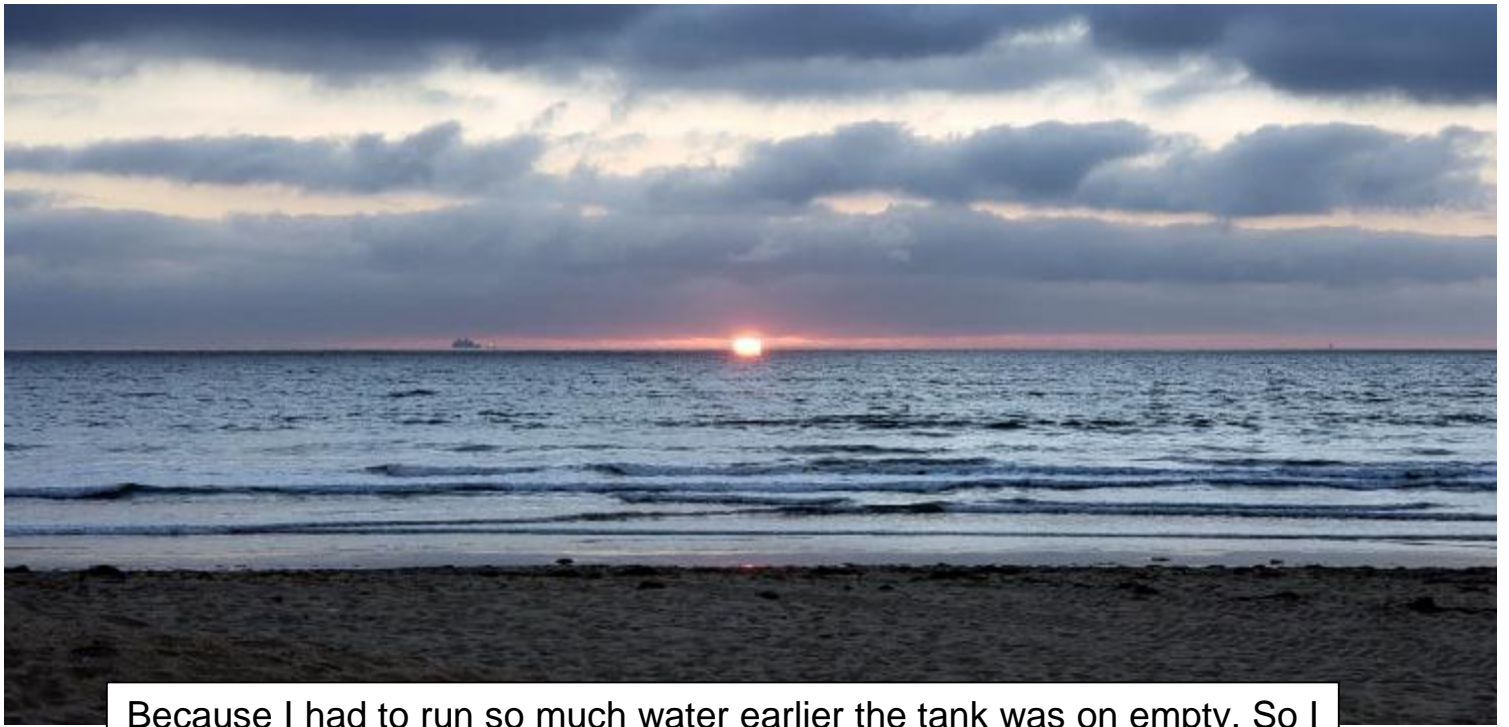
Built in 1911, for \$2,500, this was the residence of the Franklin Van Valkenburg family. Captain Van Valkenburg was the Commanding Officer of the USS Arizona, killed in the line of duty when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941.



Built in 1887, this is one of the oldest houses on Coronado. It is believed to have been lived in by the Reid brothers as they designed the Hotel del Coronado.

Possibly the oldest home still standing in Coronado. Moved here from San Diego by barge in 1887, the actual year of construction is unknown.

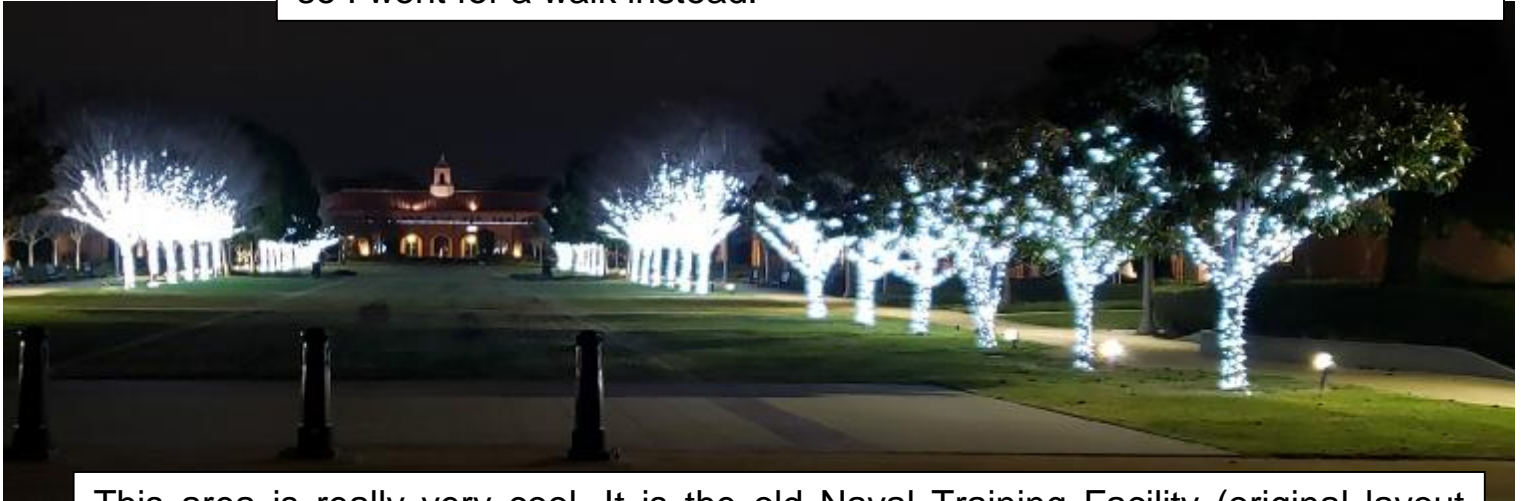




Because I had to run so much water earlier the tank was on empty. So I rode the bike back to the RV and drove the RV to the Silver Strand Beach State Park campground where the gentleman at the gate was kind enough to let me fill 'er up for free. As I was leaving the beach I saw this photo. Then I drove back to the park and walked a little ways so I could get the photo below of the Coronado Bridge.



Then I drove back downtown to have dinner at the Brigantine, then I drove back to Liberty Station. Whew! I didn't feel like sitting and typing so I went for a walk instead.



This area is really very cool. It is the old Naval Training Facility (original layout below) whose buildings are now being used for restaurants, shops, stores, art galleries, schools and museums with lots of open space, courtyards, fountains and covered walkways. A real pleasure to wander through and safe to sleep here too.



This is one of the places at Liberty Station I DID want to visit. Darn.

The San Diego Comic Art Gallery is closed for renovations. We expect to re-open in **Spring 2020**.





The photo above is a restaurant. The little domes are each individual tents where your party sits together. The lights are great and the music very pleasant.

So I am beat. I biked about three miles to the hotel; explored the hotel on foot; biked five miles down for lunch; biked five miles back; walked a mile+ downtown; biked a mile to the beach; walked about 7/10 on the beach; biked four+ miles back to the RV; walked another half mile to get the bridge shot; walked from where I parked to the restaurant; then walked another two miles around Liberty Station. Total is about 18 miles riding and 5+ walking. A full day. By 10:00 I couldn't keep my eyes open. By 10:05 I was asleep.

Coronado was fun to visit. I enjoyed it. I won't mind going back once the hotel renovations are complete, and I would like to eat at the tent restaurant.

Alright, getting late, time for bed.

Until next time....