

## Ormand Family Activity

### June 2011: Faith's SCUBA Trip

Bonjour et bienvenue a Faith's guest star Travelogue! The totally informal (well, mostly) part of the Blog where Faith tells all about her adventures on the girl's trip to San Diego. It's a trip that the biology teacher at my school, Mrs. Chandler, takes a group of girls on over June, and often another in July. I guess it's usually based on who wants to dive and who doesn't. This time, though, we had three divers and two snorklers. The trip is kind of an informal learning/school... thing. It follows the Jesuit style of teaching-- that everything ties into each other, rather than the "Prussian method" that most, if not all, schools use. Meaning that there are short classes that follow a set bell schedule, learning by having tests in a classroom rather than going out and doing things firsthand. That way, we are told what to think and often forget pretty much everything learned previously as we start thinking about the next class. We're such good little ignoramuses.

So on the trip, we learned history, starting from the time of Cabrillo, approx. 1542, to the present day, and then going out to explore God's creation in the sea every so often. Thanks to a non-profit organization started by Mrs. Chandler and Mr. DeFer, our resident historian/ boat captain/co-creator of the trip, we had our own vessel, the Leona June. (Apparently, it originally belonged to Mr. DeFer's mother, and was named after her. They remodeled it.) She was a beautiful burgundy (The boat, not Mrs. DeFer Sr.), docked in Sea World Marina behind the Cirque Du Soleil Amphitheater. We could hear it going on, quite often. The Leona June came complete with upper level wheel house, galley, two very small bathrooms (only used in nighttime emergency or when out at sea), and "The Pleasure Cove"-- two bunks where we girls slept. There was a hatch in the ceiling in the Cove where one could get out onto the bow of the boat. We only used it once. Mr. DeFer would either sleep on his own boat, or on the bench-beds in the wheel house when out at sea. Mrs. Chandler and the two alumni who went with us, Lindsey Syers and Mandi Thomas, slept on bench-beds in the galley. Small but very cosy. Even more so when all five of us girls decided to squish onto the top bunk. It was actually pretty nice and comfy. This is the Bow of the boat, complete with Lauren and Amelia, two of the three Juniors, Lindsey, Mr. DeFer in the Background, and Mandi, who is trying to fix Lauren's watch. I don't think it worked.



We started with Cabrillo. He went off to find a way to the West Indies from California. So he sailed on in from Spain, dismantled his ships in Mexico, and transported them all over to Baja California because he didn't want to sail around the tip of South America. He rebuilt his ships and sailed up the coast, discovering San Diego along the way. Apparently, he found some really nice land, but he didn't leave very good landmarks on his map, so they couldn't find it again. To top it all off, he accidentally broke a limb and died of gangrene. So his crew decided to go home, after burying him. Incidentally, his grave marker has been found, but not his grave. Here is Jasmine, the third



Junior, posing with his statue, which is completely manufactured from the artist's imagination.(No images of him exist.)

The girls together! Left to right: Lauren, Jasmine, Amelia, Amie (my fellow senior and the principal's eldest daughter), and moi. Following with tradition, we all became Junior Rangers. I have the certificate and the plastic badge to prove it. Not very hard-- all one has to do is ask for the Junior ranger's guide and fill out the questions. Apparently 80 year old women can also become Junior rangers, which I think is pretty funny. We also saw a submarine going out to sea! Next up: The gang and Mrs. DeFer at the Maritime Museum.







The HMS "Surprise"-- yes indeed, the ship from the movie. Below deck are exhibits about Captain Cook, Herman Melville and other mariners. Complete with Gregory Peck in Moby Dick.



Here is first mate Jasmine in the Russian Submarine bunk. They had nice little curtains for privacy, but the bunks were VERY small. And yet it is my belief that the Russian sub was somewhat more spacious than the US sub that was also part of the museum.



Knots aboard the Star of India. There was a very spacious hold filled with ropes of all shades of brown and white, as well as all sizes and widths. In the ship's galley, we met a cook who was actually in the movie "Master and Commander." Or so he said. Apparently he is the one carrying the lantern in the first scene, but it is so dark you can't see his face. He said he is also the one who responds to Russell Crowe's orders in the whipping

scene, though you only hear his voice. So who can tell? Below deck there were exhibits showing the different ships through the ages, complete with models of the Mary Rose (Ship during the reign of Henry the Eighth, used in his battles against France), The HMS Victory (Admiral Nelson's ship), and the Vasa (the ship that fell over in the water when it was barely off the dock on its maiden voyage).

Here we also learned that the Star of India used to be an immigrant ship called the Venetian, and that it had sailed around Cape Horn. We took pictures of ourselves hoisting up the pretend sails on the fake mast in the hold, and then we were run out by a group of small, excited children. From there we went aboard the ferry, the Berkeley, and saw the Paul Gaugan and Cook exhibits, as well as pump engines (thought of dad and of Girl Genius) and nautical equipment. On our way to the US sub, we saw a giant Coors barrel and a picture of a man doing the Scottish sword dance with a couple of umbrellas.

Here, Amelia is sticking her head into the opening of the communication pipe on the Medea, a small pleasure boat.



Lindsey was a lot of fun. "Good One!" And below, a back and side views of us hoisting the sails. That's a trip tradition, too. Below that, an example of scrimshaw, really quite amazing. There were also pieces of fancy knotwork. Apparently, if you could prove that you kept your hands busy, you rise in favor. After seeing all there was to see we went to the giftshop and got a

pressed penny for me.









The rare "Scripps Mandifish" as well as an actual fish. Unfortunately, I could not get any really good pictures of the fish, though they were pretty amazing. I hate to use flash inside after being stalked by that security lady at the Mini Time Machine, and that was the day I forgot to charge my camera battery... double whammy.

We were supposed to sketch what we thought was cool-- like the Sunflower Sea Star, Wolf Eel, and the Grunt Sculpin. The Sculpin was so cute! He had little feathery red legs and just whooshed about in his little tank! Plus his name is really funny. We were able to see the fish in the Giant Kelp Tank being fed by divers, which was pretty awesome, though we kept waiting for the Giant Black Sea Bass to come down. She never did. I can't remember what this fish here is... it could be a smaller Black Sea Bass, or some other fish. There were also leopard sharks, horn sharks, and swell sharks, as well as a barracuda and, Charity's favorite, Moray Eels. Then we zipped off and ate lunch, coming back for the tide pool creatures (lots of teeny crabs), and the "Global Warming is Evil and



Will Destroy Us All" Exhibit. Man, that Ken Ham lecture a few months ago really came back. ("What do poodles give birth to?" "More poodles!") And of course, we ended with me getting a pressed penny for my collection, and going into the gift shop.



After Scripps, we went out to the Coronados for some diving. Lauren and I were getting certified, having done our pool or "closed water" diving. We did two dives that day. During one I almost kicked an eel in the face, and was introduced to the wonders of Garibaldi and Sea Hares. Upon surfacing, we were surrounded by millions of tiny, lavender jellyfish. If someone had taken their regulator out and opened their mouth, they would have recieved a mouthful of them, they were so small. Of course, no one did that, but it kept running through

my mind. Thankfully, they were harmless, so we just floated about two feet or so from the surface and just observed them for a while. Here we picked up "Larry the Sea Cucumber" (we weren't supposed to name it lest we became attached to it, but it was too good for a bad punster to miss.) Did you know that Sea Cucumbers excrete sand? That is how they eat-- they get the nutrients from sand and, well, anyway, we vivisected Larry the Sea Cucumber. I felt kind of bad, but they have no nerve endings, so they can't feel pain. RIP, Larry. I hope the fishes found you tasty.

Dana Point. We moved the Leona June to Dana, from Whence we went to

Santa Catalina. More history, this time about Richard Henry Dana (1815-1882) and "Two Years Before the Mast". He wrote it from journals written during the time he went on board the Pilgrim as a seaman (he went to Harvard and studied too much; his doctor told him sea air would restore his eyesight. It worked.) When he came back, he became a lawyer and argued for the rights of Seamen. He also argued the Dred Scott case, one of the triggers of the Civil War.



Ahh, the Sea Hare. We got him from Catalina Island, where we saw giant sheep crabs and huge amounts of Sea Hare Orgies. Sea Hares are nudibranchs, or "naked lungs," meaning the lungs or gills are little frilly tissue things along their backs. They are actually pretty cute and some look like black balloons. More Garibaldi, as well. Mrs. Chandler, Lindsey and Mandi went off on their own dives while we girls went to Avalon beach and flew kites during our Surface Interval, and apparently there was a grumpy little Garibaldi that kept bonking into Mrs. Chandler's mask. (Garibaldi are like algae farmers. They can try to protect their "farms", but they are small orange fish not unlike goldfish crackers. Only bigger. And alive.) We also found a horn shark's egg, which is spiralled like a big screw. One wonders how painful that was.

On our fourth dive of the trip, we were finally certified as divers, and the

next day we dove again, and collected a sea urchin, which we vivisected. We had to give it a haircut first. The dive after that was amazingly terrible. We could hardly see at all. On our final dive, we found a foot-long leopard shark, and a stonefish. Coming back to Dana Point, we got into a hotel and stayed there for a night while Mr. DeFer and our paramedic, Eric Jacoby, took the boat back down to Sea World Marina. We showered for the first time in 5 days, and while we were doing our laundry we played a game I would very much recommend called Quelf, right there in the hotel's laundryroom. Whenever someone would walk by they looked in and probably thought "What on earth are those weirdos doing?" The people watching the not-so-hidden camera probably got a kick out of it too. Then we went to a nice hole-in-the-wall burger joint called A's Burgers, which I would also recommend. I wonder what would happen if one played Quelf in A's. On the way back to the hotel, we saw a very drunk man pass out next to a gas station. It was pretty funny. He just fell over onto some grass and conked out.



Solvang! My new favorite town in California, populated by Danes selling their Danish wares. And VERY good pastries. Here, in front of a shoe store, is a giant clog, with Jasmine in it. When we came out of the store, we saw some Asians doing the same thing! Below is Amelia and her



second head. That is from the "Sock Loft", which, obviously, does not only sell socks. But that is the main merchandise, so that's okay.

Near Solvang is the Mission Santa Inez. It is very pretty, and you can go and have a self-guided tour, which includes the courtyard, cathedral, and the walkway entitled "El Calvario", which has the 14 Stations of The Cross. It was beautiful and peaceful, and there were benches with a great view of the valley below. It was amazing to just sit and contemplate everything Jesus went through to save us.





The National Steinbeck Center of Salinas, California. Now in our timeline we come to the Great Depression. Our trip was actually founded upon Steinbeck's book, the "Log from the Sea of Cortez" which he wrote with his good friend, marine biologist Ed Ricketts. Really good book. Above is my horrible

picture of the statue of Steinbeck, and to the left is my awful photo of Amie with "The Pearl." That story is based upon a tale Steinbeck heard while on his trip in the Sea of Cortez. Personally, I have a great dislike for the book, but it has wonderful insights on human nature. He also wrote a book called "Travels with Charlie", where he documents his trip across

America in a camper with his dog, Charlie le Chien (Charlie the Dog. Very clever, Mr. Steinbeck!) I have yet to read it but I hear very good things about it. At the Steinbeck Center, there was also an exhibit on Japanese people during the Depression, and the little Japanese person in my manga-loving heart leapt with joy. I guess the Japanese-ness carried over into my souvenir for dad-- a picture of a panda eating bamboo, made from recycled 100% Panda Poop. It says so on the wrapper.

Sea Lions in Monterey! Reminds me of the Coronados. There were a LOT of sea lions there, including one who gave birth while we were there.



Monterey! Where Steinbeck departed for the Sea of Cortez, and also home of Cannery Row, the model for another Steinbeck book of the same name. Apparently there are sea otters out in the kelp forests, but we did not see any, much to my dismay. Unless you count the Giant Stuffed Animal Otter in the store with all the "Hairy Otter" shirts. (hahaha! I wanted to get one but did

not have enough money.) Anyhoo, to the left are Mr. DeFer, Mrs. Chandler, Lindsey and Mandi with Mr. Steinbeck the Bust. And no trip would be complete without some hooligans making fun of him (below).

Our hotel, which, unfortunately, I have no pictures of, was in El Cambrio, a small town with a delicious western-themed pizza parlor, JBJ's. The hotel was quaint, and right next to the ocean, after you cut across the golf course and waded through the kelp on the beach, keeping a wary eye out for the dead fish head (still muscle-y, complete with tailbone.)





Mr. Ricketts, Biologist, killed in a train accident on the way to town for beer. Some... person... thought it would be funny to put gum in his nostrils and eyes. We were not amused.



The Marina Layer, which is a layer of clouds over the ocean. Very pretty. This was on the road either to or from San Simeon, where Hearst Castle is. He was... interesting. As you can see from his "Neptune's Pool", complete with antique columns and Temple roof.







The Three Graces. There are little statues of them in the giftshop, so I'm assuming that they're an important feature... This guy had movie stars over all the time, and his castle is amazing. If a bit unrealistic.



The "Roman Plunge." Located under the tennis courts and lighted by little glass squares put into the courts themselves. Gold is melted into the tile, and there are Roman statues all over the place. The diving platform is 10 feet high, the pool 10 ft deep.





Amie is Star Struck. Must be the Castle's influence, all that expensive antique stuff imported from everywhere and all the important people who came to visit... After the Castle we trotted on back to San Diego to the Marina.



This is from the parking lot of the Midway. It is, in fact, the Carl Vincent, which buried Osama Bin Laden at sea. The USS Midway was pretty amazing... It is indescribable. It was made during World War 2, but only finished 8 or so days after the War ended. It was used in wars like Korea and Vietnam, however. They have all the naval planes on deck, as it is an aircraft carrier. We

learned all about landing, taking off, and who does what. We all became Junior Pilots by doing another question/answer thing from a kiosk near the headphone handout area. We received another Badge, awarded to us by a feisty old man who said they were genuine fake gold. Meaning plastic, painted gold. I liked that man!



The last day, we played around in the water and cleaned the boat. For dinner, we all dressed up in our sun dresses and went to a restaurant called "Wahoo's Fish Tacos." I did not have any Fish Tacos. I had teriyaki steak, which was absolutely delicious. After Wahoo's, we drove out in our bus to the beach across from Sea World, and talked around a bonfire until the fireworks show, which was beautiful. This is the sunset over the bay. Then we spent our last night on the boat and left at about 5 in the morning the next day.

This has been Faith's guest appearance Travellog, dedicated to Charity who says I have a lot of text. I hope you didn't get too bored, Charity. I tried. Faith out.