

Sacramento Trip

Wednesday March 6, 2013

I woke up to the sound of Mommy making breakfast. Today's the day, I thought. I quickly jumped out of bed and ran down the hall. In ten minutes I had brushed my teeth and hair and changed into my school clothes. I quickly grabbed my waffle and gobbled it down. Finally, I put on my shoes and got into the car for the short drive to school. It was a slightly overcast day and the big-chartered buses looked cool standing in front of our school. I was so excited as I ran up to them! My friends and I gathered outside the bus and chattered while waiting for Ms. Dowling to arrive. Then it was time to board the bus. Yeah!

When we got into the bus I was shocked to find that it had TVs. Five minutes later we were heading to Sacramento and watching 'Toy Story'. When we got to Sacramento crossing the golden drawbridge across the river, our first stop was at the Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento. We met our guide for the day, Mr. Henderson. He was used to be a schoolteacher and was very knowledgeable. After a quick snack of cookies, we headed inside the museum. The museum was amazing! There were many models of engines and train cars. There were wax figures that looked almost real. We were shown around the museum by docents dressed in period costumes. We learned about the history of California and the railroad in California. First when gold was discovered and people wanted to come from the east they had to take the treacherous wagon rides across the country, come by ship around the tip of South America, or cross the jungles of Panama. All took 4 to 6 months and were very dangerous. We learned about the great people behind the idea of making the railroad to California. The big four – Huntington, Stanford, Crocker, and Hopkins. We also heard about the engineer who found a way to get through the Sierra Nevada mountains, Theodore Judah, and the Chinese workers whose hard labor made the dream a reality. We met Traveler Betty (a woman who was one of the first passengers on the trans-continental railway), a California farmer who packed the refrigerator cars with all the fresh fruits and vegetables from California for people in the east, and an Irish railroad manager. I got to hammer a golden spike into the railroad that marked its completion! Well, a model of one. We also saw a replica of the real golden spike used in the ceremony of the meeting of the Central Pacific

railroad meeting the Union Pacific railroad at Promontory, Utah, to mark the completion of the transcontinental railroad. We climbed into a model of a sleeping car and a dining car. One of the most interesting things I saw was the heaviest engine in the world. It was a steam engine. To my surprise that engine was built all by women during the World War.

Our next stop was the Wells Fargo Museum. Agent Nadia taught us about the Pony Express and showed us a model of the Wells Fargo chest where they kept all their gold. She talked about the different ways of getting to California from the East Coast in the 1800s, the gold rush, the early bankers, and even the bank robbers. Before we left we got to hold a half gold, half lead bar. That was heavy.

By the time we got out of the Wells Fargo Museum it was lunchtime and we were all super hungry. We headed to Round Table pizza where I had two slices of cheesy Pepperoni pizza. Next up...shopping! We walked through the streets of Old Sacramento. I bought ten pieces of Taffy and a lollipop at the Candy Barrel, a Sacramento magnet from a souvenir store, and a keychain from the Wells Fargo museum.

At 1:00pm we got back on the bus and drove to the Capitol. We saw the Stanford Mansion on the way. The Capitol building was very impressive looking. After we went through security, we sat under the pretty dome and learned about the history of the building and government in California. We walked down the corridors and saw the Governor's office. There was an impressive looking bear statue in front of his office. We then climbed four flights of steps. We saw paintings of old California governors on the way. The Assembly was closed but we got into the Senate visitors' gallery. We could look down and see where the laws of our State are made. Mr. Henderson talked to us about the procedure. The Senate was painted pink. Not a color I would have expected. Apparently that was modeled after the House of Lords in Britain. We took a class picture outside the Capitol and then drove to Sutter's Fort.

Sutter's Fort was an old trading post. It was built on a small hill that wouldn't flood. The rooms in the fort were still maintained as they were in the 1800s. It was interesting to see the bedrooms, kitchen, carpentry room, gun shop, and even a jail. There was an old well, a bell, and a wagon on the grounds. We saw footprints and pelts of different California native animals. We saw Patty Reed's doll, the small wooden

doll that came with the ill-fated Donner party. We stopped at the gift shop. We listened to a man playing the violin. We really got to experience how people lived so long ago.

On the drive back we finished watching 'Toy Story' and started on another movie. When I got home, I was exhausted. That was the best field trip that I have ever had!!