

Earl's Diary, Sunday, July 13, 2014

To all my Loyal Readers,

Today I must leave Port Orford and head north to Bandon, a tremendous distance of 26 miles. Along the way I will pass by a couple sights that might be of interest to my readers although I will not be stopping on this trip.

Just out of Port Orford is Cape Blanco State Park with its picturesque lighthouse. A couple years ago I stopped by, and even climbed the circle stairway to the top. Oh yes, the lighthouse is on federal property. Therefore Senior Access passes are honored.



Erected in 1870, this lighthouse stands on Oregon's farthest west point of land and is the oldest one continually operating in Oregon.

At the top of the winding stairway is the rotating Fresnel lens. Something I didn't know is it's pronounced frey-NEL.



Construction was of interest. Since no roads led to the cape, the cost-saving decision was made that the bricks would be made locally, instead of bringing them from San Francisco at an enormous expense. An agreement was made with a local craftsman to furnish two hundred thousand bricks for \$25/thousand - about a third the cost of transportation from SF alone. About eighty thousand of these brick were accepted and paid for, the rest rejected.

The remainder of the supplies had to be landed at the Cape through the surf. The first delivery arrived in May of 1870. When the vessel was partially unloaded, a gale struck, driving the ship onto the beach and causing the loss of the remainder of the cargo. Another shipment arrived in July, and the tower and keeper duplex were completed.

This isolated lighthouse holds at least four Oregon records: it is the oldest continuously operating light, the most westerly, it has the highest focal plane above the sea, (256 feet), and Oregon's first woman keeper, Mabel E. Bretherton signed on in March 1903.

A campground is located in the park.



On down the road is what I call a tourist trap (depending on your point of view)- also, depending upon your point of view, it is a very interesting place OR a very poor expression of private enterprise. Now, I didn't, and haven't stopped here. I am only presenting it as a place you might like to visit. The photos are taken by others.



The **West Coast Game Park Safari** is a walk-through safari park near Bandon. It opened in 1968, and includes snow leopards, lions, Bengal tigers, emu, capybara, and cougars.

The park is a petting zoo and captive breeding program, including endangered species such as the snow leopard. They sell and loan big cats to other parks and zoos.

Reviews are all over the place as you can see from a couple samples.

"Best animal park EVER!!"
Reviewed July 9, 2014

This is a must-see if you are going to the Oregon Coast!! The baby animals are beyond cute and sweet. Best of all - you can actually pet them! It is obvious that the staff really love the animals, and take excellent care of them. We are going back SOON to



see the new batch of babies!!

"DEPRESSING"

Reviewed June 24, 2014

If I could give zero stars I would. It is not a safari, but a tiny concrete zoo. Large cats and bears are in tiny concrete compounds and look completely miserable.



None of the staff seem like animal experts, or even to

like animals all that much. A 7 week old baby tiger was fed a bottle of milk and held on a chain by an aggressive handler, as throngs of people lined up to take a quick snap. It felt like a tourist attraction from the old days, when animals were abused for money. I have no idea why people give this place good reviews.



"More like a zoo"

Reviewed June 29, 2014

They have Tigers, Monkeys, Panthers, Bison, etc.... They have a baby bear, tiger cub, and other animals to pet. The place is disorganized when it is time to pet the baby animals. If you have kids its okay and expensive. If you are a couple, then just avoid it.

I couldn't pass by Misty Meadows to stock up on my annual supply of Marionberry Jam. (I reported on Misty Meadows in last year's diary pages.) They have lots of berry, and spice products, both in individual bottles, and in gift containers. If you go by there, be sure to stop in. It's well worth the stop.



It was a short drive between Port Orford and Bandon. The Peanut and I are now firmly planted in our site at Bullards Beach State Park. Thanks for coming along with me today - - bye for now - - Earl