



It was the big day and I had mixed emotions. I was excited and a bit apprehensive about the trip to San Francisco for twelve days. We all met at Heathrow airport on the morning of Saturday 28th of July. Today just happened to be our leader's birthday so she got given a free breakfast by Prêt a Manger. We finally boarded the plane and the journey was 10 hours to San Francisco. On the flight we got given a task to work out how much fuel the plane uses to get to California. It was quite funny because everyone had their heads down working trying to find the closest answer. The winners were Gemma and Jess; they met the pilots and saw the flight deck. When we got to San Francisco the camp crew were waiting to pick us up and they drove us to the camp site. We were the first people to arrive as the camp didn't start until the next day. By this time we were all exhausted but had to put up our tents before we could sleep.

Sunday 29th July

This morning we went to Pleasanton town to get tea towels and we had lunch there. Helen and I shared a small pizza but when it came it was so big that we couldn't finish it. All of the people started to arrive and the camp was finally coming together. That afternoon we met up with our host patrol and played ice breaker games so that everyone could get to know each other. By the end of



camp we all became really good friends.

Monday 30th July

Today was the opening ceremony. I was very flattered to be chosen to carry the Union Jack

in front of everyone. I had to place it in a holder stage but my holder was broken, so the flag fell over and knocked over the other flags. Luckily a member of the camp crew came over and held the flag up. After that we had a camp photo. It was so hot everyone thought they were going to melt. In the afternoon we exchanged swaps, I now have badges from America, Canada and Japan which I am going to sew on my camp blanket. After that we had dinner and a camp disco that was really fun.

Tuesday 31st July

Today was the day where we did our activities. My first activity was fencing which I did with Helen. I



have never tried it before but it was amazing. I learnt lots of new skills which I will probably use again in later life. Then I went to my second activity which was to make your own pillow case. We had a choice of fabrics to make a pillowcase with. I chose a dog pattern. The session was really fun because you had to use different skills like ironing, cutting and, sewing to make your pillow case.

Wednesday 1st August

This morning we had our cooking challenge. We came last but we had fun and the judges said we had made a good attempt. In the evening the whole camp went to a baseball game which was amazing. At first I didn't understand the rules of the game but as the game progressed I understood a bit more. One of the girls in the camp caught a foul ball and she got to keep that. The best thing was we got to go on yellow busses and the Americans didn't know what the fuss was about! After dinner there was a pj party which was brilliant.

Thursday 2nd August

Today was my zip line adventure. It was a whole day off camp zipping from tree to tree, platform to platform amongst redwood, pine and fir trees. It took about an hour to get there by coach. There were 10 zip lines and one of them was 800m long. I felt very nervous at first but once I was on the zip wire it was so exciting because you were going so fast. We finished the adventure with a 30 foot drop that you had to abseil down. It was a really fun day and an experience that I will never forget. When I came back we had a campfire and we sang our duck song which was really funny.

Friday 3rd August

Today the whole camp went on an off- site visit to Santa Cruz which is a theme park and beach. I went on lots of rides, on one ride we went so fast, Katie lost her hat I couldn't stop laughing. On another ride called skyline, you got amazing views of the coast so Gemma and I took lots of photos. We were given some money and had to find our own dinner today, I chose a pizza from Pizza Hut. Tonight was film night and we watched a film about Girl Scouts which was really good.

Saturday 4th August

Today was a party day at the camp. There were lots of activities such as a bouncy castle, rock-climbing, scuba diving, water slides, candle dipping, a gladiator ring and so many more all of it was amazing. It must have taken a lot of planning. My favourite was the scuba diving because it was just so good, I had never done it before so it was a new experience for me and one that I would like to try again. Tonight was the closing ceremony. Anna and I were chosen to read some famous quotes.

Sunday 5th August

Camp is over now so we took down all of our tents and said goodbye to all of our friends. We then travelled to our youth hostel in San Francisco. When we got there we dropped our bags, then we found out that we were going on a duck tour of the city, which was a tour on land and sea. This was brilliant. We found out about San Francisco and some of the group got to drive the boat.

Monday 6th August

Today we cycled across the Golden Gate Bridge to a town called Sausalito. The views were so amazing it felt unreal. The bridge was so crowded. We took lots of pictures of San Francisco. All together the trip was about 9 miles. We had lunch in Sausalito and we went shopping. We then queued up to get a ferry back to San Francisco. Today was one of the best days yet.

Tuesday 7th August

Today we went to Alcatraz which was a prison up until the 1960s. We had an audio tour which told us all about the history and what life was like for prisoners. It also told us the story of the great escape which was really clever. The whole day was very informative and interesting. At the end we got the boat back to the mainland and we went shopping at Pier 39. We had our dinner in china town which was lovely.

Wednesday 8th August

Before going home today we went to the cheesecake factory in Macy's. The portions were huge and my slice was 7 layers which was delicious but there was so much that I was unable to finish it.

The whole experience has been amazing. I had a wonderful time visiting new places, trying new activities and I have made many new friends from all around the world that I hope to keep in touch with. I have also made new friends from Buckinghamshire that I am looking forward to meeting up with again at the reunion in October. The trip has increased my confidence and independence. I would like to thank everyone who gave me grants and supported my fundraising to enable me to take part in this trip of a lifetime. Also I would like to thank the leaders and other Guides in my group for making the trip such a fun and memorable experience. Hopefully I may be able to go on another International trip in the future.

Emma Anderson

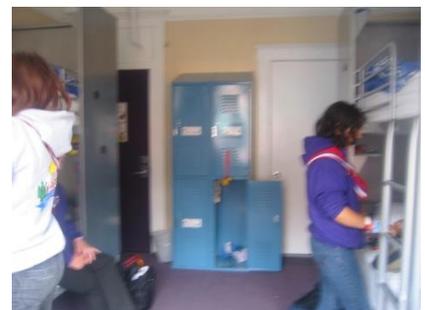
Some pictures of America



Our camp



room in the youth hostel





A race track by our camp