City of Rochester Honors Finch with Proclamation

The final and appropriate touch to a great reunion was the presentation of a proclamation at the banquet from Robert J. Duffy, mayor of Rochester, New York, officially declaring Saturday, September 22, 2007 as “USS FINCH Day”.

As touted by Jim Wachob throughout the entire planning process “Rochester is a great city and they will make us welcome!” No truer words were spoken - Rochester was indeed a great site for a reunion and the city did make us welcome. The hotel was first-class with very large and spacious, well appointed rooms, unbelievable service from the staff which included free airport pickup and return, plus shuttling folks to local dinner locations and the list goes on! The overall experience was top-notch. Jim and Vivian, the Strathallan Hotel and the City of Rochester have raised the bar to give us a new standard to meet in future reunions!

Wednesday as usual was a quiet kind of day as shipmates and their guests came to the hospitality suite for registration. Vivian had things well organized and made everyone welcome. The suite was well stocked with a variety of beverages, an array of home baked goodies and a splendid assortment of snack foods and condiments that were furnished with the compliments of Wegmans, a Rochester based food market chain that is gaining popularity in the northeast and middle Atlantic states.

Thursday saw most folks off on a bus trip to the Genesee Country Village Museum. Everyone who attended gave glowing remarks about the Village and the trip overall. Those of us that didn’t take the bus trip spent the day visiting some of the local attractions, including the George Eastman House or the Rochester Museum and Science Center.

In the evening we had our annual spaghetti dinner, but with a couple of modifications. Because some folks have dietary restrictions and have to watch those carbohydrates, chicken was added to the menu. The method of serving the meal was also modified. Two of the hotels finest chefs set up serving stations which included a choice of salad, sauces, pasta, and meat (chicken or meatballs). As persons came to each station they described to a chef what they wanted on their plate, and the chef put the individual meals together as specified. The process was quick and efficient and more importantly the meal was fantastic! Following dinner we were entertained by a local group of eight men and women, The Geriactors, who told sto-

Finch to the Mountains

After the success of this year’s reunion, 2008 finds the Finch headed to even greater heights! This is the first visit to the mountains since Gatlinburg in 2001. Bob and Karolyn Buck (DER ‘59) have graciously agreed to be our hosts this coming year in fabulous Colorado Springs, Colorado. This is a beautiful mountain community that claims among its many wonders Pikes Peak, The Garden of the Gods and the United States Air Force Military Academy. Located about 6,000 feet above sea level it is in the heart of America’s Rocky Mountains. Colorado Springs is located 65 miles south of Denver and is serviced by both the Denver International Airport (75 Miles) and the Colorado Springs Airport (20 miles). If you plan to rent a car, you may be able to get a better deal on airfare by flying into Denver. The hotel offers free airport transportation from the Colorado Springs Airport. Let them know your arrangements when making your reservations.

Bob and Karolyn have made arrangements at the Academy Best Western Hotel on the north side of Colorado Springs not far from the U.S. Air Force Academy. Hotel amenities include complimentary full hot buffet breakfast, outdoor spa tub, and an atrium with an indoor pool and bar service. You can check out the hotel and all the services at their website www.theacademyhotel.com.

The nightly cost at the hotel is $79, plus tax, if rooms are booked no later than 30 days before the reunion, otherwise they are $109 per night. You can also book days before or days after at this rate, as long as you do it at least 30 days in advance of the reunion. Call today 1-800-766-8524, and be sure you mention that you are with the USS Finch Reunion group.

Based on the many, many things to do in the Colorado Springs area this year’s reunion theme is “Come Early - Stay late”. The Buck’s have tentatively planned a side trip to the Royal Gorge on Thursday followed by our traditional Spaghetti Dinner in the evening. The Royal Gorge has been the background for many
Friday morning found us back on the bus for a day at Niagara Falls. The trip included a boat ride up to the edge of Horseshoe Falls on the "Maid of the Mist", "Cave of the Winds" adventure walk below and up close to the American Falls, admission to the aquarium, Imax theatre, a narrated tram ride, plus some spectacular views of the falls. The unseasonably warm weather at the falls was as awesome as the breathtaking views of the cataracts. Getting up close and personal with the great Niagara was a memorable experience, and being enveloped in a shroud of mist helped to refreshen us on a day when the air temperature rose above 80 degrees F.

Saturday morning the ladies headed for the New York State Wine and Culinary Center in Canandaigua, New York for a morning of cooking lessons and insight on how to match wines with various foods. After observing the preparation of the two course meal, the ladies enjoyed the delicious repast that was created in their presence. Following their meal the ladies made a shopping stop at a local variety store, and then went on to the Finger Lakes Gaming and Race Track in Farmington, NY where they joined the men for an afternoon of fun and games. Of course everyone had to find their favorite horse and luck was on our side. In the third race (officially listed as "The USS FINCH Reunion Association Trophy Race") the choice was simple, horse number two, "Captain Pete", owned by a guy named Anderson was posted at 5-2 odds. Of course with a name like that, he was destined to become a runaway winner, and many Finchers turned a small investment into a retirement dream come true! Of course some of us (including yours truly) weren’t quite that lucky. Harry Murray (DE 43-46), presented the FINCH Trophy to the winning jockey as the cameras clicked and flashed.

Saturday night our annual banquet was held at the Strathallan Hotel. After reaffirming our allegiance to old glory and our nation, a musical tribute to the colors was rendered by bag piper Liisa Kirby of the Caledonian Highlanders Band. Jim Wachob then read the Mayor’s proclamation. We all then sat down for supper which I

Colorado Springs 2008, continued from page 1 movies and is located about 60 miles southwest of Colorado Springs. The Royal Gorge is famous for it’s bridge which is over 1,000 feet above the raging Arkansas River and is often referred to as the “Grand Canyon of the Arkansas”.

Friday’s plans call for a trip to the Garden of the Gods and dinner at the Flying W Ranch outside of Colorado Springs. The Garden of the Gods is home to spectacular natural formations, with sheer cliffs, red rock spires, balanced rocks and oak covered valleys. The Flying W Ranch is a working cattle ranch that specializes in western food and entertainment. According to our hosts, guests experience picturesque natural surroundings and mighty tasty Chuckwagon suppers. Check it out at www.flyingW.com

Saturday activities are still being planned but include our business meeting and a ladies trip to Broadmoor shopping area is being considered. Of course the reunion will conclude with our banquet Saturday evening. If there is one essential document everyone should bring it would be your Golden Age Passport or National Parks Senior Pass as it’s now called for free or reduced admission to the National Parks.

"Come early and stay late" is extended to everyone that enjoys the scenic beauty of the mountains. We are not planning a trip to Pikes Peak, but it is certainly on the list of things visitors must see while in the area along with worshiping at the Air Force Academy Chapel on Sunday morning. The chapel has an open worship service and offers a range of services for Christian and Jewish worshippers.

Several other national attractions are close by including, Cripple Creek, an old restored mining town that offers casino gambling. There are also a couple of narrow gauge railroads in the area that offer spectacular trips through the mountains. www.colorado.com and www.experiencecoloradosprings.com are just a couple of the many web sites that open a window into the myriad of things to do in the area. When making your travel arrangements to the area be sure you plan to…..

Come early and stay late!

Reunion Websites and Phone Numbers
Best Western Academy Hotel 1-800-766-8524
www.theacademyhotel.com

For Hotel shuttle service to and from the Colorado Springs Airport notify the Academy Hotel when you register and they will make the arrangements to pick up you and your guest!

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Finch Twentieth Annual Reunion
Strathallan Hotel, Rochester, NY
September 19-23, 2007 Jim and Vivian Wachob, Hosts

Thursday, 20 September

Dinner at Wegman's

Hospitality at it's Best

Eastman House

The Geriactors
Friday 21 September - Scheduled activities: Niagara Falls

- Maid of the Mist
- Horseshoe Falls
- Cave of the Winds
22 September - Scheduled activities: Culinary Institute, and Finger Lakes Race Track and Casino

Finger Lakes Race Track

Finch Crew Presenting Race 3 Trophy
Thanks to Vivian for her efforts!

Finger Lakes Chorus

You had to be here to appreciate this scene!

Jim's Fleet
High Altitude Tips
When visiting Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region, there are several ways you can give your body the time it needs to adjust to the altitude and prevent altitude sickness.

- Stay below 7,000 feet the first day (the city of Colorado Springs is 6,035 feet above sea level.)
- Avoid strenuous exercise the first day of your vacation in Colorado Springs.
- Drink lots of water before and after your arrival.
- Avoid alcohol and tobacco.
- When sightseeing, work your way up to higher altitudes at about 1,000 feet per day.
- Give your body time to adjust.

You can contact Scuttlebutt at: poredder@aol.com
Life Membership
At this year’s business meeting there was a discussion concerning Life Membership in the Finch Reunion Association. It was decided to keep the Life Membership requirements as currently prescribed in our by-laws “Any member submitting payment for ten years ($100.00) will be deemed a LIFE MEMBER and all further dues will be waived.”

Web Site Update
Check it out!! Our webmaster, Richard Resnick, has made some changes and updates to our website www.ussfinch.com. The crew list has been updated to include email addresses and a process for individuals to opt out of having their email address on the page. This is also a good time to make sure your email address is current.

Finch Models
Jim and Vivian Wachob built and painted wood models of the Finch that were available to buy at this year’s reunion. Jim has about 25 of them left in his fleet and will bring them to next year’s reunion so those shipmates that missed the Rochester reunion will be able to own their very own “Finch” model. All proceeds go to the Finch Reunion Association.

UFO Sighting
Scuttlebutt has it that the Finch was involved in a UFO sighting in the 60’s. If you have any info on this, please let me know and I’ll try to sort through it and publish an update in a later issue. You can check out the article at http://www.ufoninfo.com/sightings/usa/630516a.shtml

Future Reunions
We have a tentative commitment from Bob Piazza to host our 2009 reunion in the San Francisco area and Jerry Meline has agreed to host our 2010 reunion in Sacramento, California. If you are willing to be a host for a future reunion please let us know and we’ll include you in the planning process.

2008 Membership Dues Are Due!!
Your dues are essential to the Association. Please make a special effort to pay your 2008 dues. If there is not an anchor * by your name please send your 2008 annual dues of $10 to Kent Overholser, 20 Warrington Rd., Vernon Hills, IL 60061.