



U.S.S.
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FINCH



DE 328 – WDE 428 – DER 328

*Distinguished Service Through Three Decades and Three Wars
World War II, Korea, and Vietnam*

Twenty-Third Year No. 1

October - December 2009

We are still able to go afloat!

The Finch crew did it!! We proved that although a few years and a lot of easy living have passed beneath our keel, we can still put her afloat when we need to!! Great job shipmates. It was a real pleasure to put to sea with all of you again.

Although it might sound like we had a lot to do with the manning of the Mercury, we actually enjoyed a rather leisurely time. No mid-watches or rats, just smooth sailing and no chipping or painting. What then did we do? We had a ball...good food, great ports, beautiful women, wonderful entertainment, very nice quarters, and the opportunity for some great camaraderie. The only thing that spoiled it was that we needed to take a couple of hours for our annual business meeting!

On a serious note, I do think most folks had a good time. Although not everyone enjoyed the cruise, it was a great place to have a reunion. The ship's crew took care of everything and most individuals ultimately found their way around the ship. There was some confusion among the first-time cruisers about what was next, but I believe most folks sorted it out and found lots of things to do either aboard ship or in port.

It was nice not having to be bussed everywhere and being able to choose from several dining options. In the dining room we had eight tables and everyone changed tables each evening so they had the chance to get to know other shipmates better. When we got to port, some folks traveled in groups while others ventured out on their own or stayed aboard the ship for activities there.

I believe most people who attended would endorse doing another cruise for a future reunion. A big thank you to everyone who pitched in and helped. It's a lot easier if there are willing helpers. A couple of our traditions were broken, no spaghetti dinner or 50/50 raffle, but we did have a great banquet each night! So perhaps we've put out a new challenge for future hosts. Spaghetti was on the menu and available for those who desired it! A cruise makes it easy for the host. You get support from the travel agent, shipmates and the crew aboard ship.



Can you name this guy?

This picture is irrefutable evidence that people can be effected by taking cruises and getting a little maturity (not to mention other things) under their belt. Would you have believed that our mystery shipmate of 50 years ago could have ever have looked so dignified. This is truly amazing!!

Canada Welcomed the Finch

British Columbia rolled out the red carpet for the return of the Finch. Everywhere you went in Nanaimo the bakeries and stores had made fresh Nanaimo Bars and trust me, they were very good!



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police also welcomed us to Canada. As you can see Margie Kieffer was welcomed and treated very nicely before her incarceration for being with Bill. On a serious note, the people, shopping, food and weather (after the first morning) was an experience that brought back memories for those of us who were on the Finch when she visited Vancouver in the spring of 1961.

The city's of Nanaimo and Victoria were interesting places to visit. Buchart Gardens in Victoria was beautiful as were so many of the other places we visited. Although late in the year, flowers were in bloom and just as beautiful as the pictures in the brochures. There are old forts along the coast that offer not only great vistas, but a glimpse into the rich history of the Northwest. If you missed the reunion, you still need to add Victoria, Nanaimo and this entire region of the Great Northwest to your future travel list.

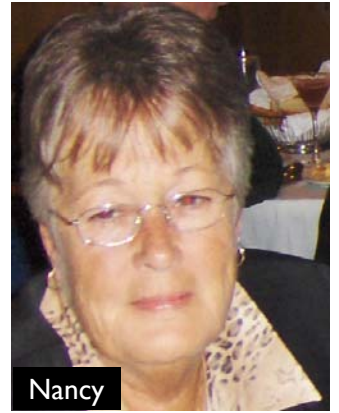




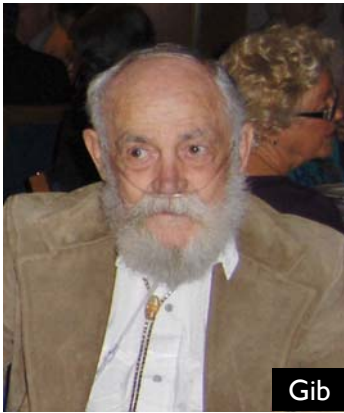
Mary Ellen

We had no DE (WW II) Shipmates in Attendance

Mary Ellen Neal, widow of Nathaniel Neal, was the only representative from this era. Mary Ellen's daughter, Nancy Morrison joined her mom for the cruise. We missed our DE shipmates and hope to see some of them at next year's reunion.



Nancy



Gib

WDE Shipmates in Attendance Gib Barbee and Richard Resnick

Their wives joined them on the cruise. Gib hosted our 2005 reunion and Richard is our Membership Chairman



Richard

DER Shipmates in Attendance



Reunion 2009 - Celebrity Cruise Ship Mercury



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FINCH DUES

This is just a gentle reminder that dues are an essential part of our revenue and if your dues are not current, be sure to send your \$10 check to Kent Overholser, 20 Warrington Road, Vernon Hills, IL 60061. If there is a \$ sign next to your name on the mailing label, your dues are current.

TAPS

William C. Fifer, DER '61 - Passed away October 8, 2009. Bill and his wife Karen were at our San Antonio reunion. Bill had been fighting a brain tumor for the last couple of years. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Bill's family.



'The City of Roses' hosts Finch 2010 Reunion

Gene and Eva Somann welcome you to their hometown of Portland, Oregon. The reunion is scheduled for 22-25 September and Gene has laid out an exciting week for us. He has rooms reserved at the unbelievable price of \$89 and the hotel provides local transportation to and from the

airport (at no charge) plus transportation to local shopping area and restaurants. Gene has a neat trip planned to take us along the Columbia River Gorge with lunch at an historic lodge. There will also be a river trip on the Willamette River following the course William Clark traveled more than two hundred years ago. For those of you who missed the spaghetti dinner this year, Gene plans to have our traditional spaghetti dinner along with a fabulous banquet featuring some of the finest local cuisine.

Portland has been described as "The Best Big City" in America and is second in size only to Seattle in the Northwest corner of America. This means that there are lots of things to see and do, plus great local breweries, wineries



2010 Hosts - Gene and Eva Somann

and lots of places to dine. Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar and check the next newsletter for things to do in Portland. The September weather should be terrific. No need to breakout the long johns! This will be a memorable reunion, because it has all the ingredients necessary to make great memories. See you in Portland! Call Gene at (503) 504-9422 if you have any questions about the reunion.

Let Richard Resnick know about any address changes.

rsresnick@ca.rr.com