

Record 444,000 Say Good-By to Fair



The New York Times (by Allyn Baum)

View of the throngs at the World's Fair during its final day. The Unisphere, symbol of the fair, is at background.

Vandalism Mars Last Day Of the Two-Year Exposition

By ROBERT ALDEN

New York bade farewell to its World's Fair yesterday.

As dusk turned to night, a record crowd of 444,000 was on the fairgrounds. But the fountains died and children wept, pleading with their parents to stay "just a little while longer."

But inexorably, as an increasing chill descended on Flushing Meadow, the big crowd headed toward the exits—for the last time.

A university ends with commencement, Robert Moses said over loudspeakers as the crowds left the fair.

"We now commence here a new park," he said. "I have seen Flushing Meadow rise from ash dump to glory and after this second fair we shall inaugurate what I am sure will eventually be the city's finest park."

At the day's end, Mr. Moses told noteholders he expected that because of the fair's overall disappointing attendance—a bit over 51 million instead of the 70 million that had been

projected—the fair would default on all or most of its remaining \$22,421,750 in bonded indebtedness. On Aug. 1, 1964, it paid 25 per cent of the original debt of \$29,879,000.

The 1939-40 fair paid off 40 cents on the dollar.

It was a day of mixed sadness and joy, a day for some to try to store up memories to keep for a lifetime—a last boat trip through Walt Disney's "It's A Small World," a final ride into General Motors' City of the Future, a last go-round on General Electric's carousel with the automated man singing "There's a Great, Big, Beautiful Tomorrow."

It was also a day of vandalism, a day for stealing ash trays and tableware—"everything that they could put their hands on and get away with" was the way the manager of the Korean Pavilion put it.

Well-dressed men and women squatted among the chrysanthemum beds pulling out tens

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Weeping Children, Sad Employes and Vandalism Abound as World's Fair Closes

MOSES SAYS PARK WILL RISE ON SITE

He Hails Exposition's Worth Despite News It Will Default on Bonds

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of thousands of gold and brown flowers by the roots. "You're only going to be stopped on the way out with those flowers," an angry passer-by told a woman. The woman promptly tore off the flowers and stuffed the roots, dirt and all, into her handbag.

Some plants were uprooted by vandals who appeared simply to enjoy the destruction, and others by well-dressed women who carefully packed them away, presumably to plant in gardens at home.

Many of the plants that were not destroyed or carried away were stripped nearly bare of blooms by women who wore the flowers in their hair or on their dresses.

The crowd on the fair's last day was a record—444,461 by 10 P.M. The old record, set Saturday, was 443,435. Its make-up, as well as its dize was unusual, for it was a mixture of people who came with shopping bags, to buy or take what they could, and of fair-lovers, who wanted to drink in as much of it as possible in its last hours.

The enthusiasts were evident as they lined up at the turnstiles before the opening at 8:30 A.M. In the first hour and a half, more people—54,167—came through the gates than ever before in so short a time in the two seasons of the fair.

Soon they scattered among the fair's fantasy land of huge cylinders and spheres, boxes and cones, ovoids and pylons, quaint medieval towns and modern cantilevered buildings.

The pavilions learned much in the hectic final days of the fair. Early in the week they admitted people to their buildings as quickly as they could to accommodate the greatest number. But with the crowds all but unmanageable, people stole whatever they could safely carry off.

Yesterday the pavilions deliberately slowed their lines to limit the numbers of those inside.

"We know it's frustrating for them," a guide at the Spanish Pavilion said. "But they brought it upon themselves by their behavior."

A Predictable Life

It was a day of sadness for many of the fair's employes.

"To me it is as if the life of a man were completely predictable," George E. Lang, a restaurateur, said. "We knew when it was to be born, we knew it at middle age, and we know now as it is dying, and there is nothing we can do about it except to stand by and watch it die."

To Victoria Melville, a secretary for two years at the Electric Power and Light Exhibit, the uprooting of the flowers was reminiscent of Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea" where the shark finally stripped to the bone the big fish the man had caught.

"We know it is all hopeless," Miss Melville said. "We know that they are finally going to tear our fair apart. What the people don't rip up, the wreckers will. But we can't help but try to fight off these people who are destroying our fair."

With tears in her eyes, Miss Melville brandished a shoe in an effort to keep people away from the flower beds.

A pavilion manager who did not wish to be identified said he had felt compassion for people having to stand on the long lines all through the summer.

"But when I saw them ripping up the flowers," he added, "I was glad that they had to wait those long hours in the hot sun. I have no sympathy for them."

Flower-Pickers Barred

"Here's five dollars, lady," James F. Stanley, an official at the Electric Power and Light Exhibit, shouted at a woman passing with a bagful of flowers. "Take the money and buy flowers from your florist. Don't tear our fair apart."

Some pavilions, such as the Vatican's, announced that they would not admit anyone carrying stolen flowers.

One woman holding two chrysanthemum plants burst into tears as four Pinkerton men converged on her in the middle of a flower bed.

"I saw everyone else taking flowers," she repeatedly protested through sobs as one of the patrolmen recorded her name, replaced the flowers and ordered her back to the sidewalk.

"I just took her name to scare her," the patrolman explained, as the woman, humiliated, picked up her son and disappeared into the crowd.

Another woman, well dressed in a matching suit and hat, expressed astonishment on being told that her shopping bag full of flowers would not get through the exit gate.

"Why, the fair's closing, isn't it?" she asked. "Who needs them?"

The fair had planted 90,000 chrysanthemums in early September. They were to have been part of the flower beds in the permanent park planned for Flushing Meadow.

In the farewell statement he



LAST DAY SALE: Some of the pavilions conducted sales in the last hours before the World's Fair closed. This was the scene during the afternoon at the India Pavilion.



FOR A BRIEF MEMORY OF THE FAIR: Visitors picking flowers in a garden at the fair before it was closed.

made over the fair's public-address system, Mr. Moses said;

"There is of course a touch of sadness about any closing, and I shall miss the fair, but it has been a summer university attended by 50 million, more than ever visited any similar enterprise, and they have testified eloquently to its worth.

"Universities refer to the end of the course as commencement. We now commence your new park. I have seen Flushing Meadow rise from ash dump to glory and after this second fair we shall inaugurate what I am sure will eventually be the city's finest park.

But Disappear It Must

"As we approach the hour of closing, expressions of regret are heard from those who apparently have just heard about the fair for the first time and want it kept open. Others who have been steady visitors say they can hardly believe that so much beauty and revelation must disappear. Unfortunately, we can't change this. Flushing Meadow Park, the framework of much of the content of the fair, will have to serve.

"New York has profited in more ways than one and is better and more favorably known as a host to strangers.

"To those who loyally helped create this Olympics of Progress in the face of many obstacles I give my thanks and gratitude.

"We have fostered enduring friendships and memories which will persist and draw the peoples of a troubled world closer together. This was mainly our objective and time will prove that we achieved it."

As busy as employes were yesterday handling the big crowds, many found time to take pictures of each other and to exchange autographs as final keepsakes.

Some Close Early

To avert final acts of vandalism as much as possible, many pavilions, instead of waiting for the regular 10 P.M. closing, closed one hour early. Some restaurants also closed early in an effort to head off last-minute pilferage.

"We don't want or need those extra few dollars an extra couple of hours would bring in," one restaurant manager said. "Besides, they've already stolen all of our salt cellars, God bless them."

There were several disappointments last night. One of these was the Johnson Wax Pavilion, which closed at 7:30, instead of 10 as scheduled.

Two thousand people were waiting in line at closing time. The management did not want to risk damage to the pavilion.

By evening, and even before, the fair was strewn with the debris and garbage of the huge crowds.

Trash bins overflowed, making the fairgrounds a place of which Fishhooks McCarthy would have been proud. In the nineteen-twenties Fishhooks McCarthy was a garbage czar who used Flushing Meadow as his dump.

After the pavilions closed, 30

or more employe parties were held across the fairgrounds.

Wrecking crews took possession of most of the major pavilions at midnight. The crews will strip them of salvageable material before demolishing them.

One of the weeping children at the main exit was a freckled, red-haired girl of about six.

"There'll be another fair someday," her mother said. "When was a little girl I thought there would never be a chance for me to see a fair again and I cried. But there'll be another one, dear, you'll see."