



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

PO Box 1926

Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone (518) 431-1943

Vol. 24 No. 11, November 2021

**November is the month when things finally begin to slow down.** The weather gets cold, tours taper off, we catch our breath, and start to wonder how we are going to make it through another winter when our main source of income grinds to a halt. Dipping into our savings is not a satisfactory answer. Well, it's November, and all you old hands know what that means. It's Winter Fund Solicitation time again. If you receive Trim But Deadly in the mail, you've already received your Winter Fund mailing. For the rest of you now is the time to think about donating!



***Walt is storing the hedgehog projectiles for the winter.***

Thanks to your generosity, we celebrated the 24th anniversary of the SLATER's arrival here in Albany, on October 26th.

**It was kind of funny, reviewing pictures of the progress we made this year and looking back on photos of all of our volunteers with masks on.** We were lucky that Covid didn't affect any of us on the ship. Masks or no masks, Covid notwithstanding, the local crew, assisted by the out-of-towners, continued to accomplish miracles this year.



***You want the wardroom emptied for work this winter? Cathy better get to work!***

Over the winter, they scalded, cleaned, and repainted the anchor windlass room, as well as the hold below and windlass room, the forward heads, and the passageway. Gary Sheedy inventoried and restowed all of the equipment stored in the hold and the windlass room and arranged the gear to create an immaculate display of deck equipment. We can now find everything when we need it. Working with Barry Witte, the RPI Midshipmen rebuilt and replaced the electric brake on the anchor windlass, making hoisting the whaleboat a much safer operation.



***Walt and Angelo making repairs to the canvas gun covers.***

The shipfitters did a complete rebuild of the shore head last winter. They fabricated a new ramp for the aft gangway that is much safer than what we had before. Then they restored four of our 20mm ready service ammunition lockers. They also rebuilt three watertight doors, made repairs to the forward ventilation intake, and welded up several deck pinholes in various locations. In addition, they restored and repainted the galley ventilation intakes on the 01 level.



***Doug found his new project for this month.***

A lot of work was done on our ordnance equipment. Two wasted depth charges were rebuilt. Danny Statile repaired two wasted MK-9 depth charges. When we found our wooden hedgehog projectiles were deteriorating, we initiated a program to restore our steel training projectiles to replace the replicas. We





***RPI Midshipman Elizabeth Flynn continued work on the gun 32 elevation dials.***

memorialize our volunteers, and SLATER crewmembers, by stenciling their names on bunk straps and life jackets.

**Topside, we got a lot of painting done, including painting out the decks on the entire 01 level, the fantail, and the maindeck starboard side.** We also painted out all of the waterways with epoxy paint. In the radio shack, **Steve and Chuck** have brought renewed life to that space. And all over the ship, the routine work to keep a destroyer escort shipshape continues. Decks get washed down, swept, and swabbed. Clocks get wound and set, meals are cooked, the brightwork gets polished, and flags are hoisted in the morning and lowered in the evening.

restored and repainted the three-inch practice loading machine. **George Gollas** worked with **George Christophersen** to repair the broken elevation handwheel on the aft 40mm gunmount. We completely repainted gun 32 and have started restoration on the train and elevation indicators. We replaced a wasted spent shell chute on the starboard 40mm mount. **Richard and Henry Burgeois** continued their efforts to get a MK-14 gunsight operational. **On deck we did a complete overhaul of liferaft number four.** **Doug Tanner** built a new grating, and **Walt Stuart and Angelo Bracco** replaced the ropework and straps and repainted it. Angelo continues his effort to

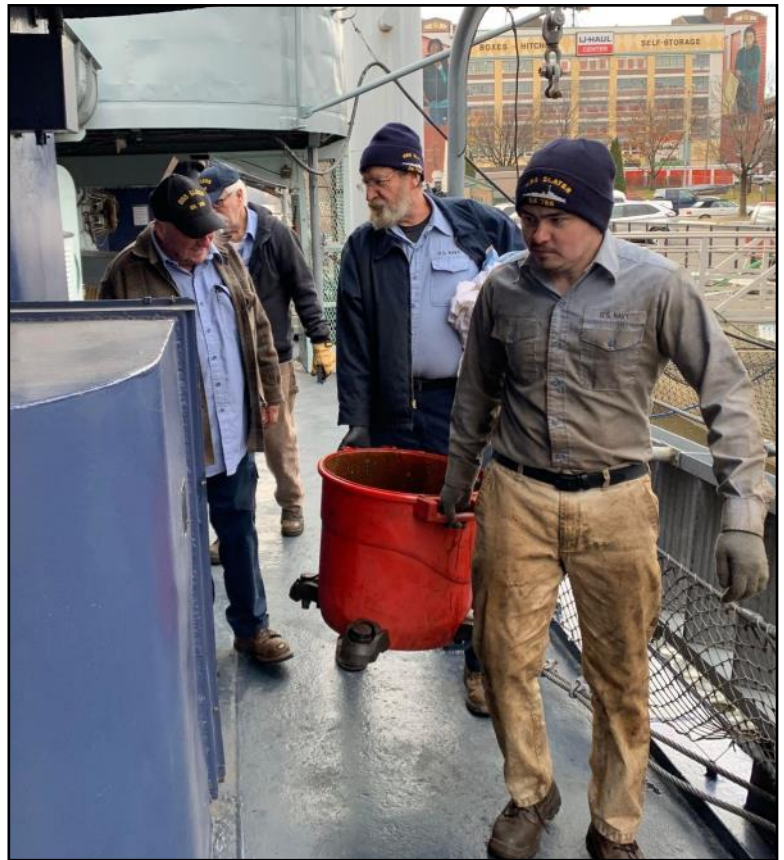


***Gary wants B2 reorganized, he started by enlisting the engineers to see what materials they could use.***



**Probably the most significant work has been led by new volunteer James Miles.** He has taken the lead in bilge preservation. He has diligently inspected all the bilges in the four machinery spaces and is in the process of making sure they are free of any standing oil and water, in preparation for painting. His work will be critical to ensuring USS SLATER's survival into the future, because as we all know, these ships rot from the inside out.

**Now the focus is on winter preparations.** Thanks to your donations, we were able to purchase new canvas covers for the three-inch and forty-millimeter gun mounts. The searchlights, 20mm guns and the hedgehog projector have all been covered. The hedgehog projectiles have all been stowed inside. The shipfitters got the fresh water system drained down to prevent freezing. All the ventilation has been closed up for the



***The engineering gang emerged from another day of bilge cleaning.***

winter. **Walt Stuart, Thomas Scian, and Paul Guarnieri** got the accommodation ladder stowed. Preparations are being made for the contractor restoration of the living spaces forward, that will be funded by our Save America's Treasures Grant.



***Danny and Earl continue work on the depth charges.***

**Thanks to all this effort, Barry Witte submitted our nomination for the maintenance award to the Naval History and Heritage Command.** We were quite honored to received the award in the small ship category, and

**Shanna Schuster** accepted the award on our behalf at the Historic Naval Ship's conference at Battleship ALABAMA in September.

**Working with her interns, John Epp and Cassidy Griffin, Shanna set up the displays and got the special collections space opened for the first time since 2013.** Our visitors were amazed at the quality of stories we were able to tell with the artifacts donated to us. These stories inspired our education team to start a podcast, "DE Classified". Each episode showcases the history of a specific destroyer escort and the sailors who manned her. These episodes are free to listen to wherever you get your podcasts or on our website.



***Let's get the guns covered before the snow accumulates.***



***You know its winter when the deck canopy comes down.***

**The "DE Classified" episode for this month focuses on USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS!** We all know a little about the *Destroyer Escort that fought like a Battleship* in the Battle of Leyte Gulf and went down in history, but listen to **John** recount the events and you may learn something new!

**Our tour guides have outdone themselves this year.** Balancing mask rules, entertaining the public, and being respectful of each visitor's comfort level was difficult, but they managed like pros. Wednesdays were manned by **Mike Marko, Alan Fox,**



**Bob Wheelock, Greg Healey, and Greg Bischoff.** While **Richard Wallace, Carl Camurati, Jim Albert, and Tom Corigliano** took care of Thursdays. On Fridays we had **Ken Kaskoun, Herb Marlow, and Charles Starks** aboard. Saturdays guides were **Fred Sirois, Paul Guallini, and Paul Guarnieri.** What happens on Sundays, stays on Sundays. At least that's what **Art Dott, Grant Hack, Chris Soulia, and Bill Goralski** tell me. Both Charles and Carl pulled double duty this year coming in on two days per week. **Shanna's** interns



***Tom was lucky enough to lead the last tour of the season. See you in April!***

this season were perhaps the best crew to be assembled, **John Epp, Cassidy Griffin, Liam Mitchell, and Christian Jones** served in their third seasons, worked as guides, as well as Duty Officers. **Sarah Alden and Xavi Fitzsimmons Cruz** came back for their second season, **Cece Amory and Chan Haggis** joined us for the summer, and **Austin Snyder** just wrapped up his fifth.

**We had an excellent turn out this morning for our Veterans Day ceremony.** With over 80 people in attendance our wood deck was packed! We have so many people to thank for taking part in our celebration. Board Trustee **Steve Long** served as our emcee and **Dean Leander Harding** delivered our invocation and benediction. The **Wolf Den of Pack 1701** served as our color guard, sang a song, and recited a poem. **Ken Kaskoun** trained our Cub Scout color guard and **Steve Stella** played Taps



***The Wolf Den of Pack 1701 helped us out tremendously with our Veterans Day ceremony.***



***Ken trained our scouts before the ceremony, and while the flags might have been a little big for them, it was sure good to see kids involved!***

March, to focus on interior maintenance, and the safety of our visitors. Thus, we have no operating income from ticket and gift shop sales, or overnight camping, during these months. While we cut to the bone, our expenses, insurance, utilities, maintenance supplies, and payroll continue. This coming year we will continue our restoration work in officer's country, and in the forward crew spaces. For the past 24 years, rather than eat up our savings, we have appealed to all of you to make an additional \$100 donation, to help carry us through the winter. Responding admirably to the plea, "Help keep a volunteer warm this winter," you have generated over \$60,000 a year in Winter Fund Donations.

**Much as we hate to lean on you for this, we know you are the folks who appreciate the efforts of the volunteers the most.** I have always believed that the only way you can lead a fund like this is by example. This year I doubled my annual

on his bugle. The **Pitch Hitters of Racing City Chorus** gave us beautiful renditions of the National Anthem and the Armed Forces Medley. We were also joined by some dedicated public officials, **Assemblymembers Phil Steck, Pat Fahy, and John McDonald.** Thank you all for joining us, supporting SLATER, and serving our country.

**None of this would have happened without your support. The Winter Fund solicitation is the key to getting us through the winter, without eating through our savings.** Each winter we close to the public between the months of December and



***James Miles, a new engineer volunteer, has taken it upon himself to survey the bilges.***



contribution and donated \$200 to the Winter Fund Drive to help keep our volunteers warm. I hope you will consider doing the same thing. Normally I like to be the first one, but since Winter Fund Donations started arriving in August, I can't quite take that honor this year. If you believe what we are doing is worthwhile, now is the time to contribute. If you cannot give \$200, any contribution is welcome. If you can afford more, please by all means, feel free to give at whatever level you believe we deserve. Our goal is to make sure that when there are no longer any DE sailors to speak for themselves, SLATER will be here to speak for them. Please join us in that effort, and give generously to the Winter Fund.



***Austin on tour showing off the 3 inch shell.***

**Don't count on global warming.** Please do your part to help keep a volunteer warm this winter. We'll prove to you we're worth it!

See you next month!

Tim



***Steve and Chuck are staying busy in the radio room.***



***Nate Shakerley and his daughter, Sabrina, continued their project, repainting hedgehog projectiles.***