



SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers

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USS IOWA in San Pedro. I'm glad I didn't have to paint her.

This September, I made my annual trip to the Historic Naval Ships Association

conference. The host ship was the Battleship IOWA in San Pedro.

With the retirement of U.S. Naval Academy curator **Jim Cheevers**, I now hold the distinction of having attended more HNSA conferences than anyone else at the

convention. Makes one start to

feel their age. My friend **Paul**

Farace, Executive Director of the

submarine USS COD in

Cleveland, and I were lamenting about the days when we were the kids in the room.

Attending with me was my friend **Ed Zajkowski**, who paid his own way from

Philadelphia, once again demonstrating his life-long commitment to historic naval ships.

The conference included seminars on security and terrorism, cathodic protection,

building a strong docent program, obtaining private grant funding, maintaining not-for-profit status, using social media, and building an effective board of directors.

For me, the two highlights of the trip were getting into the conference room at the Los Angeles Maritime Museum, and getting a behind-the-scenes peek at all the

treasures that the Museum has hidden in their storerooms. In spite of being warned

of my previous reputation as the greatest scrounger in the historic fleet, Museum

Director **Marifrances Trivelli** allowed Ed and me access to the Museum's inner

sanctums. Hidden in a corner, I found the only DE part I could use, a MK-60 gunsight for a 3"/50 caliber open mount. To her credit, Marifrances explained that she was well aware of what it was, and had hidden it there from the last scrounger who had expressed an interest in it. I told her I had reformed from my days as a scrounger, but I'm not sure if she believed me, as she never let us stray from her sight.

The real treasures of the Museum were on display in their conference room, more commonly known as the "Brass Room." The walls of the room are covered with ship's builders' plaques, machinery plates, and brass gauges. These items were all donated by the late **Roy Coats**, who, as a purchasing agent for National Metal and Steel, Inc. (formerly Boston Metal and Steel), oversaw the scrapping of hundreds of ships between 1946 and 1983. The Company President, **Joseph Shapiro**, and Roy endeavored to salvage significant artifacts and photographs. These items represented the technology superseded just after World War II. Roy personally preserved and took care of the objects that he mounted on display in the lunchroom at National Metal and Steel. After the firm closed its doors, Roy brought and mounted the display in the four walls of the second floor meeting room of the Los Angeles Maritime Museum.



The wall of ships gone bye.

To see the names of all those famous ships that no longer exist was an emotional experience. Of special interest to me was the fact that there were many DE builders' plaques on the wall, predominantly representing Evarts-class ships that were disposed of right after the war. Among them were Griswold DE-7, Carlson DE-9, Crouter DE-11, Doherty DE-14, Gilmore DE-18, Burden R. Hastings DE-19, LeHardy DE-20, Charles R. Greer

DE-23, Whitman DE-24, Martin DE-30, Wyman DE-38, Sanders DE-40, Gosselin APD-126, Cook APD-130, Thomason DE-203, Chaffee DE-230, Hodges DE-231, Cloues DE-265, Joyce DE/DER-317, Edwin A. Howard DE-346, Doyle C. Barnes DE-353, John L. Williamson DE-370, Jack Miller DE-410, Walter C. Wann DE-412, Dufilho DE-423, Leslie B. Knox DE-580, and Gendreau DE-639. The real heartbreak

for me was seeing the fourpipers names, like Hatfield, Humphries, Lamberton, Kilty and Talbot, because none of them remain. The room of scrapped ships really gives one a sense of purpose and why it is so important to save USS SLATER. The room can be viewed on the web. [.](#)



Anybody know where we can get a load of fishnet floats?

I had another revelation while viewing the museum's exquisite collection of artifacts and ship models:

fishnet floats. For years I have been trying to come up with an inexpensive way to replicate the floater nets that the ships carried during World War II as part of their life saving equipment. The original floats were about 5" in diameter, about 2" wide, and strung together in groups of seven on 1" diameter rope. The old fishnet floats I saw in the museum would be a perfect substitute. So, if anyone out there knows commercial fishermen who are disposing of old fishnet floats, have them get in touch. We'll give their old floats a great home.



Jerry Hofwolt presenting Ed Zajkowski his lifetime achievement award.

The highlight of the event was the farewell banquet on USS IOWA's fantail. It was a beautiful evening, with excellent food and drink under the stars. The evening also included a trio of ladies who did Andrews Sisters tunes, and fireworks at the close of the evening. I was especially proud of the fact that the organization recognized "**My friend, Ed Zajkowski,**" with a Casper Knight Award. **Jerry Hofwolt,** the Executive Director

of the USS Bowfin, presented Ed with the award for his 37 years of service to historic naval ships. Many ships have benefited from Ed's dedication, most notably USS JOSEPH. P. KENNEDY DD-850 and USS SLATER. For Ed, it's the equivalent of a lifetime achievement award. The award is the highest award the organization gives, and all who have worked with Ed thank the awards committee for their choice.



Boats Haggart and Walt Stuart completed testing all our lifelines.

I'm not sure if I should be proud or paranoid about how well this organization runs in my absence. This month saw the departure of our Interpretations Coordinator **David Pitlyk**, who formally passed the torch to **Shanna Hopson**. In my absence **Rosehn, Shanna**, and the crew hosted three reunion groups, USS STRAUB DE-181, the joint USS SUSAN B. ANTHONY AP-72/USS MONA ISLAND ARG-9 group, and USS PIEDMONT AD-17.

All were enthusiastic in their appreciation of what we have accomplished aboard USS SLATER. Our tour guides are keeping busy, even with the season winding down. With Shanna moving up to management, we found ourselves a little short on tour guides. We hired two new guides who are learning very quickly, and are ready to give tours just a couple of weeks after being hired. **Eric Morgenson** and **Jonathan Whyte-Dixon** are both students at the University at Albany. Eric is a Ph.D. student working as a teacher's assistant as well as at the SLATER. Jon is a senior who is almost finished with his bachelor's degree in history. Since his first day of training here, he's been chomping at the bit to get out and give tours! We are so glad that these new guides picked up on things so quickly, and are able to help us out by giving tours.



With tour guide Alan Fox are Stephen Linakis, center, who served in the Hellenic Navy in AT LEON and to the left, Jan Lane, whose father served on USS FESSENDEN DE-142 in WWII.

Andrew Smith, a second year guide, has been mentioned on the USS SLATER's page on TripAdvisor, with raving reviews, we might add! James Braun has also been mentioned on TripAdvisor for his excellent knowledge of the ship and its weapons. We are so thankful that we have such great interns! Our volunteer tour guides are just as awesome. They are so dedicated it doesn't matter whether they deal with rain or shine, zig-zagging around restoration, or talking (shouting) over construction. They are out there teaching our visitors all about Destroyer Escorts. It doesn't matter if our guides have one visitor or twenty, each and every one of them makes sure that our visitors have a good time and learn something along the way.



USMMA King's Point deck cadets visited for a day.

This September, we were honored to host the retirement of Navy Captain Thomas Owens on September 12th. The parking lot was filled to capacity for one of the largest events we've hosted recently. The ship sparkled with white and gold as Tom's shipmates honored his thirty years of service. Master of Ceremonies CAPT **Peter T. Finney**, USN and Tom's longtime friend CAPT **Michael J. Nevins**, paid tribute to their shipmate. The event even drew Congressman Paul Tonko, Albany Convention Bureau Director Michele Vennard, and former Mayor Gerald Jennings, the man who brought USS SLATER to Albany.

Doug Tanner and his shipfitters tackled a problem with number two life raft rack this month.

The issue was that the rack was built before we had the mooring dolphins and, under certain conditions, the rack scraped against the monopile, chewing up the paint.



Out with the old raft.



Raft number two in place with the modified rack.

Doug redesigned the rack to accommodate this. He set **Danny Statile, Tim Benner, Dave Mardon, and Earl Herchenroder** to work cutting the rack apart, making the modifications, and welding the rack back together. Then it was up to **Barry Witte** and his crew, who moved the raft forward and mounted it in the number two position.

~~The following Monday, Boats Haggart and Walt Stuart rounded up the whole crew to mount the last of the new rafts into the number four position aft.~~ That completed the life raft project, with the exception of stenciling, mounting the paddles, and provision canisters. In another completion, Gary Sheedy finished the fabrication and installation of the smoke generator exhaust cowling on the fantail. That enables him to run ventilation through the space, so that chipping could continue, even on the hottest of days. His primary chippers, Ron Mazure and Bill Wetterau, continue to peck away at the steering engine room and the shipfitter shop. They tell me they are about 75% complete.



Benner, Sheedy, Wetterau and Holt admire Sheedy's new vent.

So, hopefully, the dust will settle soon and Shanna can start to uncover all her artifacts and put the special collections displays back together.



Engineers Mike Dingmon and Ken Myrick working on the radiator for the starting air compressor.

The engineers have undertaken a new project. Now that they have the B-3 ship's service generator back in action, they need 600 psi air for starting. We had been using a small substitute compressor located in B-1 for starting air. However, it didn't have near the capacity of the original, and it took a long time to build pressure and fill the starting air flasks. However, thanks to the efforts of **Herb Dahlhaus**, we had two of the original starting air

compressors in storage in B-1. One of them had been completely restored. The problem was that they are water-cooled, and we had no seawater cooling available. The boys put their heads together and came up with the idea of using one of the original steam heaters and a fan to cool the compressor. Thus, we expect to have a functioning water-cooled starting air compressor in about a month.



NPTU CPOs and CPO selects 2015.

We also received some help from the NPTU FY16 CPO Selects early this month. About forty Chiefs were on hand to supervise the fifteen selects. As has become a tradition, they spent the night aboard the ship as **Smitty** cooked his traditional lasagna for them. The Selects worked in shifts, cleaning bilges in B-3 and polishing bunk frames in C-203L. We also had a visit from a group of US Merchant Marine Academy deck cadets, who made the trip up the Hudson in the training ship T/V LIBERATOR.



The way it's supposed to be: Chiefs playing poker in the CPO Mess.

We have several upcoming events. The fall work week begins October 4th and runs through Friday the 9th, so it's not too late to spend a couple days living aboard scraping and painting. On Tuesday, October 13th, the Capital Area Chief Petty Officers Association will celebrate the 240th Navy Birthday aboard USS SLATER at 1130. This is their tenth annual ceremony.

This year they will recognize Earl Herchenroder as their selection for the Volunteer of the Year. In doing so, this will be the first time an Army veteran has been distinguished with this honor. On Wednesday, October 28th, we will honor the forty years USS SLATER served the Hellenic Navy as A/T AETOS. That day we will commemorate Oxi Day, the day that the Greek Government rejected Mussolini's demand that the Greeks permit him to occupy their country.

Coming up on Friday, November 13th, we will host our USS SLATER benefit at the Fort Orange Club. This year's event will feature a presentation by the Commanding Officer of the Nuclear Power Training Center, Ballston Spa, Captain **David Fowler**. He was the Executive Officer of USS Bainbridge (DDG 96) when they effected the rescue of Capt. **Richard Phillips** of the M.V. Maersk Alabama, from Somali pirates on April 12, 2009. We will also recognize **Doug Tanner** as the recipient of the 2015 Trustees Award, for his 17 years of dedicated service in preserving USS SLATER. If you're a member, be on the lookout for your invitation in the mail.



Clark's doctor told him to give up welding, but he didn't say anything about cutting.

Finally, Chief Clark Farnsworth was advised by his ophthalmologist that it might be a good idea to give up welding. We have to believe that Clark's eye doctor's jaw must have dropped with the idea that this 93-year-old was still dragging an arc. "You're still doing what!!!" Anyway, Clark need not worry. We've got plenty of other work to keep him occupied.

See you next month.