



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
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Vol. 3 no.11, November 2000

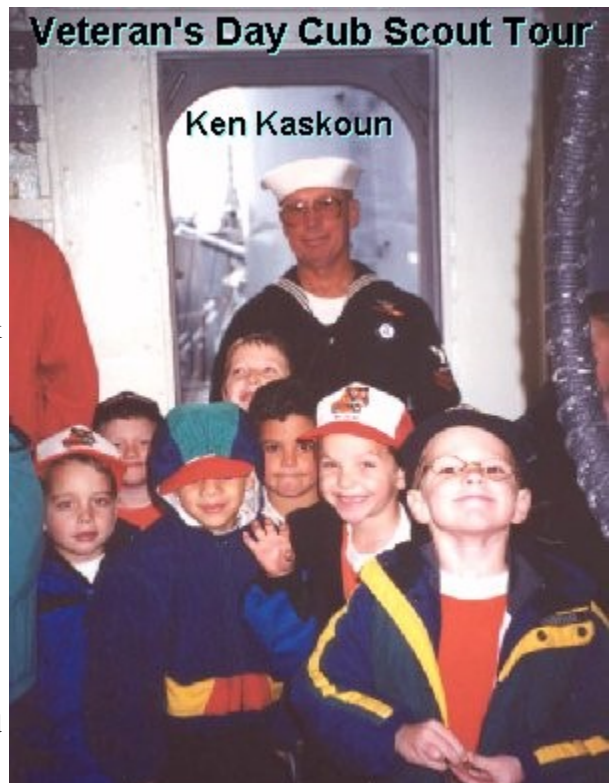
As the season draws to a close, it's time to catch our breath and reflect on where we are and where we're going. SLATER and her crew had a great year. This seemed to be the year that we turned the corner towards respectability and acceptance by the Albany Community. Frank Lasch can now walk into the Fort Orange Club with his head held high. He quoted a friend he met at a party who said, "I can't believe what you guys have done with that rusty hulk. When I first saw it I never imagined the potential it had." This attitude should make our local fund drive goal a lot easier to reach. That seems to be the general feeling. Getting the sides painted was a really big deal. We don't look like the "Wreck of the Hesperus" any more. I used to say that this ship gave new meaning to the word scow. That's another joke I can't make anymore.



**GE Selkirk Practice Rescue**

We have a lot of interaction with the community. The Confined Space Rescue Team from the *General Electric -Selkirk Plant* used SLATER as a training platform to perform a practice rescue. In their scenario, an unconscious man was carefully removed from B-1 between the main engines. Deb Moore got us a lot of great publicity on that one with several newspapers and TV stations covering the drill. We also had a visit by the *Capital District Police Training Group* and their narcotic-sniffing dogs. The dogs are called upon to work aboard ships in the Port, so SLATER makes a great training platform for them. Oh, by the way, I'm happy to report the ship came up clean.

Veterans Day was a big hit, with a passel of scout troops visiting the ship for tours to interact with our veterans and the TV stations filming some of our veterans giving tours. "The Slater Silhouette", a parade float built by **Dave Floyd** and **Dick Walker**, was out spreading the word about the ship. Dick and **Ken Kaskoun** braved the cold weather in SLATER'S open Jeep to pull the float in the Albany Veteran's Day parade. We're currently using a borrowed boat trailer to provide the wheels under the silhouette. While the folks who own the boat don't mind loaning us the trailer in November, they may see things a bit



differently if we want to use it for the Fourth of July, or some other boat-intensive holiday. So if any of you hear of a boat trailer that someone wants to get rid of, let us know.

**Speaking of spreading the work about Slater**, CAP DESA President, **Don Justus**, was recently in Castleton at the *Maple Hill Middle School* talking to students about the ship and showing off some photos. He gave a second presentation on Veteran's Day night for adults and both were well received. Finally, **Les** and **Annette Beauchaine**, **Chris Soulia** and **Nancy** will be putting their energy back into the dogtag sales at Crossgates Mall so we will continue to have a little cash coming in during the four months we are closed to the public. For the rest of us on the ship, it's back to the port-a-john, no water and layers of thermal underwear.

**As we get prepped for the end of our third season, the crew is already hard at work getting ready for next season.** The deck crew **Smitty, Raf, Earl, Chris, Ed,** and **Pat** have been hard at work chipping out compartment C-201L, the first of the three aft berthing spaces we hope to restore this winter. The painters **Erik Collin & Gene Cellini** are following close behind. Erik has also been cross-rated to "COOK" and he & **Bill Scharoun** recently served "SLATERBURGERS" with all the fixings to a Saturday Volunteer crew. Of course **Claire** was also there with her platters of cookies & brownies. (This is enough to make any person want to volunteer!) The electrical gang **Larry, Bob, Don** and **Ken** are finishing up back aft and now working in the forward crew's head. The shipfitters **Clark, Tim, Red,** and **George** are repairing holes in the deck and doing the metal work in the aft crew's quarters as part of the restoration process.



Mmmm ... "Slaterburgers" Erik Collin



Chuck Teator - Galley Cook



Bob Whitney - Chow Line

**On Monday, November 13th, Gus Negus and Gary Sheedy cranked over the emergency Diesel engine in B-4 and it ran!** They shut her down after ten minutes and checked the oil. It wasn't milky. They cranked her over again and ran her for another ten minutes, until the temperature started to climb. They shut her down and checked the oil again. Still Clear SUCCESS! This completed a three-year project started by **Tony Dudes** and **Tony**



Work on Emergency Diesel in B4

**Demitraszek** back in 1998. Two previous attempts to run the engine resulted in water in the lube oil system. Thanks to the SLATER angels, all three-cylinder liners have been replaced. **Barry Witte** and **Gary** are working on the generator and switchboard, and **Larry LaChance** and **Russ Ferrer** are completing the cooling system. It's a long shot, but we hope to have the generator on line for the trip over to Rensselaer.



Tim Brenner & Gary Sheedy  
Welding starboard

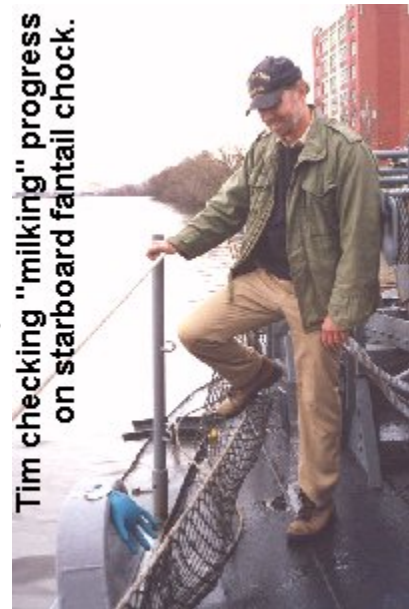


Whose "Milking" this job ?

There was the day I went into archival storage in the chemical warfare locker aft. I looked up to see daylight in the upper starboard quarter. A lot of daylight. It seemed the deck under the chock was totally rotted out. A combined team of **Doug, Clark, Red** and the *Glens Fall's Naval Reservists* moved all the documents to the laundry, cut off the chock, cut out the wasted deck, fit and welded a patch in place. **HTI Kent Chase** made short work of the overhead welding. **Tim Benner** repaired the chock over three weekends. Some of the crew started believing the chock must have had udders on it.

We have a lot planned for the four months of winter. **Roy Gunther** is working hard to complete the whale boat interior. We are using our remaining grant money to purchase a cover for the whaleboat, as well as covers for the flagbags and the hedgehog projector. We have purchased an engine for the boat, and it should be ready for installation in March. We'll hopefully use the water department crane while we are on the Rensselaer side to set the motor. At the same time we're planning to have **Hal Hatfield's** shop fabricate a platform and pedestal for the rangefinder, so we can lift all that gear up to the flying bridge at that time. If we're really ambitious, we may try to move the loading machine back to its' original position while we have the crane available.

Tim checking "milking" progress on starboard fantail chock.



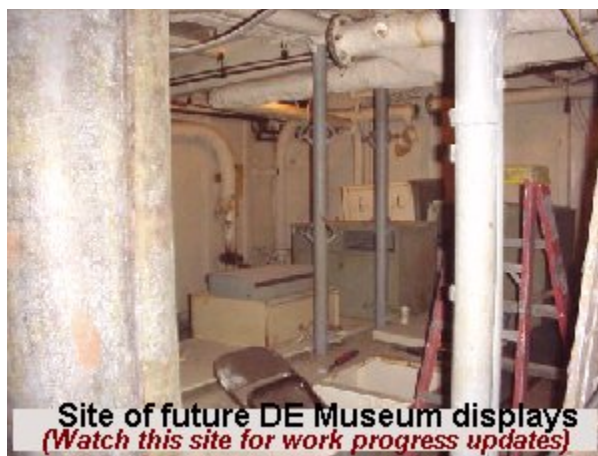
**Gary Sheedy** has two big winter projects on tap. He's planning to pull up the ceramic tile in the galley, and to restore the reefer machinery space. We're all waiting to see if an electrician can really chip paint. **Dan Wing** is continuing work with interior signage, and is planning to repaint and stencil all the hedgehog rounds this winter. The gunnery gang lead by **Larry LaChance** is working to be able to demonstrate at least one three inch mount on power drive, and working to get permission to use one of the guns for a saluting charge. Ex -Coastie **Rich Pavlovic** has joined the gunnery gang and is spending two days a week doing detail restoration on the sight telescopes and electrical boxes on gun 3. New volunteer **Bill Coyle** has started working down in the aft engine room cleaning and maintaining. He's looking for fellow snipes that want to join him to make the place presentable. Finally **Bob Donlon** and **Ron Mazure** are spending Mondays in the sonar shack restoring that space.

**Doug Tanner** got his gang from **GE** down for a couple of special projects. They installed the float alarm on the septic system, installed a temporary door to the passageway of the wardroom to help retain our precious heat this winter. They are working with **Russ** to complete the heating system aft adding some more fin tube around the aft supply fan. Doug also made a check-off list for securing the fresh water system and septic systems, which will unfortunately have to happen in the next couple of weeks. This SLATER gang seems determined to see the restoration through thick and thin. There was

one cold and particularly miserable Monday when I thought I would be alone all day. Who'd want to come out in this crappy weather? Well, by 1030 we had sixteen men working aboard. These guys (and gals) are something else.

**In moving toward real museum status, we have several big projects planned for this winter. Dave Meyersberg, Pat Perrella, Mike Stenzel and Eric Weidman** are planning to inventory and label our entire museum collection. This will involve moving all our artifacts from aft berthing to the wardroom. While we are closed to the public we will use Officer's Country as our "Clean Room" and sort and catalog the entire collection. This will clean up a mess that we've been feeling guilty about every since we got the ship and the artifacts started to pour in. In March, we hope to get most of the DE items out on display. The remainder of the collection will be placed in dry secure stowage in the three-inch magazine under the Chief's Quarters. This will get them out of the noise and chaos of the restoration that is going on back aft.

**As for the creation of exhibit space, we have a plan to get your artifacts out on display until we can get a shore side facility.** We will use the method that worked so well on USS KIDD (DD-661). We will take berthing space C-201L and repaint it. We will then clean and repaint the bunk lockers, and place a light fixture in each locker. Then we will have safety glass covers made for the lockers, and your DE artifacts will be displayed in the lockers, alphabetically by DE/DER/APD name. In every other respect, the compartment will remain unchanged. The bunks will be rigged, triced up, the decks cleaned and painted, and the original light fixtures replaced. For those of you who lived there, it will still be your old bunkroom.



**We took out the Bulkhead that the Greek Navy added to partition off the small space to starboard, just aft of sickbay.** One non-standard alteration we will make is to install two watertight doors on the forward bulkhead, port and starboard. Eventually, these will serve as the public access into the machinery spaces, and we will restore B-3 and B-4 for public visitation. That's still a year or two down the road, but we feel it's best to install those doors before the space is repainted and the exhibits set up. We will continue to work with the *New York State Department of Education* to achieve formal museum status and develop our cultural agency profile.

**So, we've gotten a lot done and we have a lot planned.** And I just know that all of you out there reading this are saying to yourselves; Jeez, I wish I lived closer to the ship so I could go down there and help us out. Well you can help us out. It's time again for the winter fund appeal. And I bet you saw that coming a mile down the road. Yes, the winter fund. That special little kick in the treasury that helps get us through the winter when we have no ticket income but have to buy all that paint, heating oil and liability insurance in case somebody slips on the ice.

**Now I know what you're all saying. Jeez! That guy always has his hand out!** Well, I apologize, but I do. When Uncle Sam isn't there to pay the bills, you have to go somewhere. There are actually three separate private funding initiatives going on now, and here's what they are. There's the normal DE Historical Museum membership program. That's the dues money that goes into the general operating fund and is used to pay for the restoration effort that is presently going on.

**Then there's the endowment drive.** What we recognize is that you guys won't be around forever for us to beg off. Thus we are striving to create a big savings account that will be invested and provide working capital during the restoration phase. We have a three million-dollar goal here, with the idea that the money will be invested, and the annual interest will take the place of your membership contributions. This is the expensive one. We're asking each DE sailor to contribute \$50.00 a year for four years for a total of \$200.00 a man. We won't spend this. We'll save it. We're hoping for a 50-50 deal here, with your contributions being more than matched by the citizens and corporations here in Albany to get to the total goal of \$3 million. The local folks are already real impressed with what we've done and are starting to get aboard. I'll admit that a lot of people had more than a little doubt about this project when the ship first pulled into Albany, but we're

overcoming that, thanks to your support thus far. We should also mention that a lot of effort is presently going on to obtain two public grants, one for dry-docking the ship and the other for the mooring and ice deflection system here in Albany.

**Last but not least, there is the winter fund.** This is to cover the cost of operating the ship in the wintertime so we can continue the restoration program. Most places simply shut down in the winter to cut expenses. Not us. There's too much work to do. We cut back, but not shut down. Thus we ask those of you who can afford it to donate an extra \$100.00 now to help us defray operating the ship this winter. Basically to buy fuel oil to keep these guys and girls warm, and to buy the paint and all the other things they'll need this winter. This is very near and dear to my heart, and that's why, as in every year past, I am making the first contribution to the winter fund. Out of my next paycheck I will give the ship back the hundred dollars. And my wife will let me because it's out of my allowance. Not like one guy who will remain nameless who handed me a hundred dollar bill this past year and said, "Put this is the kitty, but you don't know where it came from." We're starting to be an underground movement!

So if you feel you can afford to give us another boost this winter, take a second look at that little return envelope that was enclosed with this issue and help us get through another winter. Then we can turn the heat up another degree.

**NOTES from Nancy:** I'm pretty sure that I've got some catching up to do note-wise; better get that second cup of coffee and settle into your nice comfy chair! Well the season is winding down - -oops that's the beginning of the boring note I was going to write, let me start again.

**Whenever anyone asks me how I like my job, part of my answer always remains the same "I work with a great bunch of people."** I really enjoy our time together. I like to walk around the ship listening to the various tours in progress, hearing the guides deal with all manner of groups and individuals. I've seen you deal with the 8 year old Cub Scout who decides his tour wouldn't be complete unless he tries to climb the mast or swing off the end of a 3 inch 50 gun. You have handled groups where 1/3 want to take the whole tour, 1/3 want the main deck and below but not the bridge; and the all the rest want to sit in the Ward Room and "meet up with you sometime later". You didn't get rattled when a 4th grader asked you if there were still "Any dead bodies left on the ship", or when a 3rd grader told you she had to leave the ship right away because, "I'm sea-sick!". You didn't panic when a parent, who is absorbed by your wonderful tour, looks at you and says, "Have you seen my two-year old, he must have wandered off-". You have patiently answered for the zillionth time, "How long is the ship going to be here?", "Do the engines run?", and my personal favorite, "Is this the USS ALBANY?".

Meanwhile on the pier, the excellent staff is efficiently fielding questions, selling tickets, organizing groups, notifying guides, amusing waiting guests and selling souvenirs. All at the same time!

All of you have my "official" thanks, of course. But, I hope that I've had the grace and presence of mind to thank all of you personally throughout the year. If that is not the case, you guys can form a committee and elect a representative to give me a swift kick . . .I mean a reminder to be more thoughtful in the future!

By the way, it is not true that every one of you is going to have the opportunity to fix a flat tire for me or carry around a portable air compressor to give my tires a needed boost my tires are now fixed! At least that's what the guy at the station told me.

See you next month.

