

# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Ship's Superintendent

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

PO Box 1926

Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone & Fax (518) 431-1943

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**N. Atlantic or Albany ?**

It seems last week we were all talking about what a mild winter it was shaping up to be and how global warming must be a reality. Then, bang, it was -5 degrees with a -35 degree wind chill on the river. Fortunately we have the heating system in place in the forward section of the ship. The biggest problem is that when it gets that cold the air lines to the needle guns keep freezing up. Talk about impeding progress. The extreme cold may also have had something to do with the bottom dropping out of the River. Low tide was about three feet lower than normal. Nothing like slacking lines when it's below zero to wake you up in the morning. I could start to miss Louisiana. And Frank Lasch has no sympathy for me. One of his

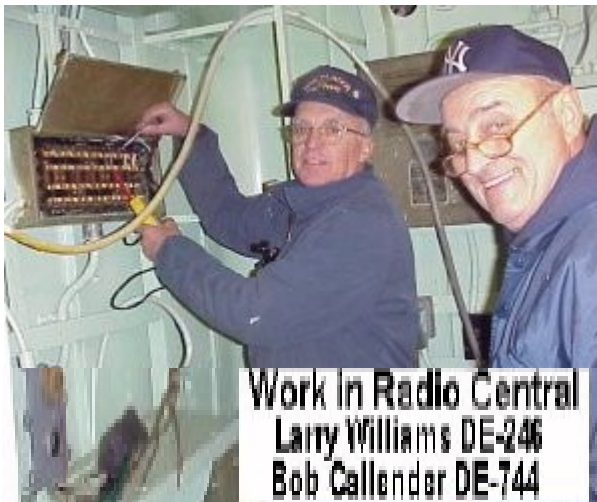
hobbies is a bizarre interest in Antarctic Exploration and the adventures of the likes of Perry, Scott and Amundsen. His particular favorite is Shackleton, because Frank says Shackleton never lost a man! However cold it gets, it could be a lot worse if you consider that territory. We know SLATER can take it - she was on convoy duty in the North Atlantic during the winter of '44 and '45 and we've got the photos to prove it.



**is this Tim ?**

**It looks like we're heading into the second week in a row when temperatures will remain well below freezing.**

Everyday when my wife drops me off she says, "I doubt you'll have any buddies today". And yet everyday we've had at least seventy- five percent of the normal crew turn out. And it is miserable out there. We'd been shutting the heat off at night while we were making final improvements to the system; so it was a cold start every morning. But by 0900 the guys (and on Wednesdays the girls) are there ready to go to work. I hate to admit it, but there are few things quite as energy sapping as being alone on a cold ice bound ship, on a cold snowy morning, waiting for the coffee to perk, wondering if anyone else is gonna show up. Why should they go out in weather like this? They aren't getting paid; they don't have to be here. They can stay home where it's warm. And then they begin to trickle in. On the weekdays Smitty (he usually beats me), Bob, Larry, Ken, Clark, Ray, Pat, Roy, Rafael, Chris, Dick, Earl, Russ, Tommy, Red, George, and Bob. And on Saturday Larry, Barry, Erik, Tim, Don, Jerry, Mike, Chris ( & a few others I'll catch hell for not mentioning). It's hard to express the admiration I have for these guys or the feeling I have walking around the ship at 0930 when three are going, wires are being run and sparks are flying from welding and cutting. They are at the point, carrying the ball for all the DE Sailors around the country who want this project to succeed so badly, but can't be here. Why do they do it? Maybe they love the ship. Maybe they haven't got a life? And maybe it's just because they're "Upstate New Yorkers", and when it's cold you just keep doing what you've done all year long.



**Work in Radio Central  
Larry Williams DE-246  
Bob Callender DE-744**

Radio Central has been sprayed out the traditional "puke" green and I'm pretty sure we got a good color match because everyone hates it. The electricians are in the process of rewiring the space and Jerry and Don are installing the equipment and doing the detail work. Tommy, Roy and Andy are working in the



**Antenna Control  
in Radio Central Restored by,  
Jerry Jones, AO-144**

Captain's Stateroom. It is ready for painting. They are installing and sanding the furniture and repairing the insulation.

Above them, in CIC and the chartroom, the chippers are chipping, getting the spaces ready for paint. The pilothouse is a mess, filled with all the radar and communications gear from CIC. We've pulled up all the tile. We've done all the metal work in CIC, cut away the Greek brackets and fittings and installed tables and shelves for all the World War II gear we plan to install. Work is also going on to complete Officer's Country. Chris and Erik have completed scaling Stateroom 203 and are working on the passageway and Stateroom 201. Both portside staterooms were scaled by the Manhattan crew as well as the head, which is seventy- five percent scaled.

**In the meanwhile**, Rafael and Dick Walker have started in the midships 20 mm magazine (presently the toolroom) and are working their way forward. We expect a "Golden Spike" type celebration when the whole deck force collides somewhere in the forward passageway. Work is slowed by having to warm the compressors with kerosene heaters, water freezing in the air hoses, and stuck air tools. If you don't put your needle scaler in a warm spot over lunch, it will be frozen when you get back. Pat Cancilla DE-441 expressed the frustration of most of the crew when he said, "I come here expecting to work and get a lot done. I hate these hold ups." By the way, Pat is 77 and spends most of his day on a ladder working overhead.



Stateroom 201  
Erik Collin



CAPTAIN'S BUNK

**Things are looking up.** Russ, Doug and Tommy spent a month tweaking the heating system. We were having problems with air in the system and the boiler not igniting. Cold oil was part of the problem. We have bleeders in the system, and heat taped and insulated the oil lines and filter, and the system is working like a champ. We're just now confident enough to start running it 24 hours a day. At night we set the thermostat on 40 and when we come in the morning it's like being in Florida. (Well almost.) My office is located right next to the fan room with the heating coils, and you can bake bread in there. (You think that's an accident?) With the system up and running 24 hours a day, the whole forward part of the ship is pretty comfortable in zero degree

weather. That's a big improvement. It looks like a 275-gallon tank of fuel will last us about two weeks. We'll keep you posted.

**Gary, Barry and Scott have had their hands full just making repairs.** Gary has the starting air compressor in B-1 back on line, and made some serious repairs to the new compressor on the 01 level after it had valve problems. Then the controller on the big compressor in B-4 went "Bang!" and tripped the breaker for what we were afraid was the last time. Barry, Larry and Scott pulled it apart and found 480 volts shorting out because of dirt on the contacts. No permanent damage. So as of this writing we have all three compressors on line for the first time since the ship came to Albany.



Stripping the XO's Stateroom  
Chris Fedden DD-711



Do you have any of these?

**We have also entered the world of "E-scrounging".** Don Shattuck DE-21, 184 has been down south in Brownsville, TX looking for parts in the naval scrap yards down there in Brownsville Texas. He brought along his own computer and printer and has been downloading photos of needed parts from Mike's website . Pat has also sent him some images of the speaker boxes and sound powered phone controls. Don has been E-mailing Larry with his "progress reports". We're hoping he can locate more electrical parts and fixtures from this area where many DE's were built.

**Y2K came and went and so did our generator.** The state took it back around Christmas to be prepared for any emergency. We really appreciated having that generator as a "Security Blanket" for the past two years and wish to thank the NYS Dept. of Emergency Services for their loan to us. Fortunately, we had made arrangements with Niagara Mohawk to run three phase 480-volt services to the pier.

**The final hookup was completed on December 16, and everyone is enjoying the quiet of not having the generator noise in the background.** NIMO's field guys did a great job running the power for us, and we are indebted to them for their service that came just in time. If you were trying to get us on the phone the second week of January, we'll bet you thought we had gone south. The phone system was shorted out for about three days. We called Don Kruse DE-682 who has a son who works for the phone company. The problem was solved the next day.

Webmaster Mike Stenzel is continually visiting the ship on the coldest days, taking pictures, gathering information and updating the website. You Diesel engineers now have something to get excited about. Mike took pictures in all four machinery spaces and has put them on the website. Now from the warmth of your own house you can view the engine rooms of SLATER. Believe me it is worth buying a computer if you don't have one along with WEB TV and a big screen TV! He has also added much realism to the gunnery pages too. Talk about a virtual battlefield just visit the "3 Inch/50 cal gun (Mk22)" and "Twin 40 mm (BOFORS) Gun" pages. He has also been working with Marty Davis DE-253 to put the dogtag business on line, so if you want to order dogtags, pull up the site, print out the form and send it to us.

**Speaking of dogtags** the gang at Crossgates Mall is hard at work with the SLATER Sale booth making money for heating oil. From Thursday to Sunday you can find Annette, Les, Nancy, the Kruses, Claire, Eric, and Julie staffing the table. Les is always there for us when we need kerosene run or more paint. Pat Perrella has been working hard with Sam Saylor DE-306, Dan and Jeanne Dugan to insure a smooth transition as all the Foundation membership records are being moved to Albany. Pat and Claire have also been kept busy mailing the SLATER Chipper-Dale and Pin-Up Girl Calendars. Which brings us into fund raising.

**Last year the winter fund appeal generated about \$5,000.00 dollars. This year, the little envelopes have brought us almost \$12,000.00.** That represents one months operating cost. We continue to be most grateful for your generosity and the concern expressed by the notes that have accompanied the donations. Between your contributions and the dogtag sales operation at Crossgates mall, we have been generating enough revenue to meet our expenses without having to dip into our savings. Our financial operating plan is pretty simple. It takes about \$12,000.00 a month to run the operation. We maintain a minimum of \$10,000.00 in our operating account (for emergencies) and a maximum of \$20,000.00. Anything over twenty is invested in the endowment fund for long term hull preservation (dry-docking). This money is invested in a general-interest bearing fund.

Presently, thanks to Ray Windle DE-640 and Roberta Goodwin working so hard on the Jeep Raffle ; Sam Saylor DE-306 and Johnson McRorie DE-346 getting the DEHF funds transferred to Albany and your donations, presently the endowment fund has \$105,000.00. Sam and Mac have also worked hard to keep the membership program moving forward. Part of the endowment fund, \$5,000.00 is composed of restricted contributions of which only the interest income can be used. As our fund drive gets underway and the restricted funds grow, they will be placed in a separate endowment fund. The balance of the monies is unrestricted and will be used as working capital. Virtually all our grant monies are "reimbursement grants" in which we bill the state after the work is completed. Having our own working capital saves us the expense of borrowing money to pay contractors while awaiting the state's reimbursement. Once the restoration is completed our need for working capital will be greatly reduced and these funds can be added to the endowment fund. If we are able to meet our fund drive goal, the interest income from the endowment fund will be used to supplement our income from ticket and ship's store sales and to provide the funds to dry-dock SLATER every ten years. In other words, we're doing better than we ever expected, and as Albany Skipper Frank Lasch says, "We're just getting up speed." Oh, and the crew kicks in about \$10.00 a week themselves for the coffee fund. Thank you all.

Partly from the success of the winter appeal and mostly from necessity, I presented the crew with six new brooms. Talk about "smiles", you would think I gave them each a million bucks! Guess our motto for the start of Year 2000 is " DAMM the expense, FULL sweep ahead!", as suggested by Johnny Mohr DD-777 and part of the NYC gang.

**Promotional efforts for SLATER are continuing to keep her in the public eye.** A recent visit by Alan Morse Editor of The Capital District Business Review featured ACCVB's Gina Mintzer and SLATER's very own "MS. SIGNAL FLAG" Pin-Up Gal for "June 2000".

The article also generated several calls to the ship for calendars!

Gina and Shannon Jahpal continue to provide Reunion Coordinators with information useful to visiting Albany and SLATER. Debbie Moore, wife of volunteer Tom Moore has also joined our ranks and will be writing articles and working with ACCVB promotional activities. We've had a lot of interest in the planned "Ice Deflection System" at the Snow Dock which will allow SLATER to be permanently berthed in that location. Debbie is working on an article that will answer everyone's questions.



**The Slater Sweepers with New Brooms**

**One day this week, we came in and it was zero, but the wind wasn't blowing and it was nice and sunny.** About two o'clock we were out on deck chatting with our jackets off (but still protected by several layers of thermal clothing) remarking how it was pretty comfortable out. I didn't know until I got home that the high that day was 11 degrees. It's amazing what you can get used to. As you folks come from around the nation this spring and summer on reunions and admire the SLATER, think of the volunteers who pulled through on these cold winter days.

In closing I'd like to share a few words sent to us by our friend Anne E. McCarthy, Tewksbury, MA in tribute to **"UPSTATE NEW YORKERS"** as they brave the elements of winter.

- At 60 above:** Floridians wear coats, gloves and wooly hats. Upstate New Yorkers sunbathe.
- 50 above:** Virginians try to turn on the heat. Upstate New Yorkers plant gardens.
- 40 above:** Italian cars won't start. Upstate New Yorkers drive with the windows down.
- At 32 above:** Distilled water freezes. Hudson River's water gets thicker.
- 20 above:** Californians shiver uncontrollably. Upstate New Yorkers have the last cookout before it gets cold.
- 15 above:** Michigan landlords finally turn up the heat. Upstate New Yorkers throw on a sweatshirt.
- 20 below:** People in Miami cease to exist. Upstate New Yorkers get out their winter coats.
- 40 below:** Hollywood disintegrates. Upstate New York Girl Scouts begin selling cookies door to door.
- 80 below:** Whiteface Mt. Freezes. Upstate New Yorkers start going deer hunting.
- 460 below:** ALL atomic motion stops. Upstate New Yorkers start saying. . ."Cold "nuff for ya?"
- 500 below:** Hell freezes over. The Bills win the Super Bowl.

Thanks, Anne - this says it all ! And yes, those Girl Scout cookies are in the CPO mess.

**SEE YOU NEXT MONTH - -**

