

SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers
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Can the weather get any worse? We got out of one of the toughest winters in memory and followed it up with a spring that's been one for the record books. It has rained to the point that the animals are starting to congregate in the parking lot two by two, which is making an already crowded parking situation that much more difficult. You try squeezing your Bronco in between the elephants and the rhinoceros. Fortunately, it hasn't affected the river level enough to be a problem, but it sure has affected everyone's disposition. It's like you can count on one hand the number of really decent days we've had since April. If the economy weren't enough to contend with, the weather has severely affected our visitor numbers. We're seeing about half the people we were seeing this time last year.

Our sixth annual DE Day Memorial Service was held on Saturday 21 June at 0930. As it has all month, the weather threatened rain, so we positioned everyone close to shelter in case the clouds opened up. They didn't. **Bob Donlon** and **Paul Czesak** did a great job putting the program together. Paul served as Master of Ceremonies. **RADM Barry M. Costello**, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group One was our featured speaker. He is a black shoe who got his start on the old FRAM USS BROWNSON DD868. He was piped aboard by side boys from the Albany and Glens Falls Naval Reserve Centers. Frank Lasch introduced the honored guests who included Albany Mayor **Gerald D. Jennings**; Assemblyman **James N. Tedisco**; Albany County Executive **Michael G. Breslin**; Rensselaer County Executive **Kathleen M. Jimino**; RADM **Harold J. Goldman** NYNM, representing the Governor of the State of New York; and **Bartley J. Costello**, Admiral Costello's brother and the man who played a key role in making all this happen.



Paul Czesak welcomes Admiral Costello aboard.



The members of the Saratoga National Honor Guard board the SLATER for DE Day.



Bob Donlon welcomes Mayor Jennings on DE Day.



CAPDESA Members Remember their fallen shipmates.

Rev. Dr. William Hempel, Chaplain of Albany Maritime Ministry gave the invocation. Albany

Police Pipes & Drums Bagpiper Kim Pologa played selections from 0915 to 0930. Don Justus, Skipper CAP-DESA did a presentation on "What is DE DAY ". SLATER volunteer CDR Roy Gunther paid homage to all the DE's and APD's that were lost in US Service as the members of CAPDESA tolled the ship's bell and dropped a carnation from the SLATER's deck for each ship. Bagpiper Kim Pologa followed with a rendition of "Amazing Grace." Tom Sawyer and The Saratoga National Cemetery Honor Guard Association fired three volleys in perfect synchronization. The memorial service closed with SLATER volunteer Chuck Lossi playing taps and the benediction by Reverend Hemphill.

RADM Barry M. Costello gave a brief talk about the state of the Navy today and his recent experiences in the Second Gulf War. He observed was that the kids out there today are every bit as committed and dedicated as the DE sailors were sixty years ago. Originally from Vermont, he attended Holy Cross College and was commissioned in 1973. His sea tours include: Navigator in USS BROWNSON (DD868); Weapons Officer in USS WHIPPLE (FF 1062); Operations Officer of Destroyer Squadron FIVE; Executive Officer in USS HARRY W HILL (DD 986); Commanding Officer in USS ELLIOT (DD 967); Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations THIRD Fleet, and Commander, Destroyer Squadron 23. He was right at home on SLATER.

Special thanks go to **Jerry Jones** and the electrical gang who worked hard to have the sound system up and running for this event, **Ken Kaskoun** and **Andy Desorbo** who handled the color guard duties, **Chuck Lossi** who got called at the last minute to fill in as bugler, **Richard and Catherine Andrian** who documented the whole event and all you other unnamed folks who worked so hard to make this day memorable.



Doug and Tim drilling for the gangway.



Chris Fedden keeps chipping away.

It's gone from pouring rain to summer sizzle but that hasn't stopped the crew. The big project for the ship fitters is the installation of the new gangway. As you may be aware, in conjunction with building the deck and the new gift shop, we had a new four-foot wide aluminum gangway fabricated that will go from the deck to just aft of gun mount 42. In keeping with prevailing museum wisdom, all visitors leaving the ship will be routed through the gift shop. The only problem is that the gangway has to be hinged to a mounting on the concrete seawall. Enter **Doug Tanner** and **Hal Hatfield** to solve the problem. Doug has sketched out a design that the Spec engineers approved. Hal furnished all the material for the project. Doug is now spending his weekends crawling under the deck or hanging off the wall and on a stage fabricating the mounting. Old pals **Tim Benner, Chuck Teal and Gary Sheedy** have been tending his safety line and passing tools to him. Whenever anyone asks me about any of the other fifty projects we have going will be finished, my pat answer is, "After the gangway is in." The rest of the ship fitters, Clark Farnsworth, Red Hume and George Erwin have been working on the chock project, and helping Doug where needed to fabricate parts for the gangway.

Gus Negus running the Emergency Diesel.



Electricians Mike Clark and Barry Witte.



Beth and Nancy are happier campers since the electricians got the permanent 208-volt power hooked up to the trailer. Dennis Nagi, and Robert "Bob" Kibbey built a weather proof shed around the transformer and junction box on the new slab. Working happily together, **Barry Witte, Larry Williams, Gary Sheedy, Ken Kaskoun and Bob Callendar** installed a new breaker panel in the gift shop, did all the ground wires, made the hook ups and ran the new power cable. Nancy, in particular, was very reluctant to move her office off the ship. But she is now sitting in the air-conditioned gift shop reconsidering that decision.



Red Hume, Clark Farnsworth and Ray Lammers hard at work.



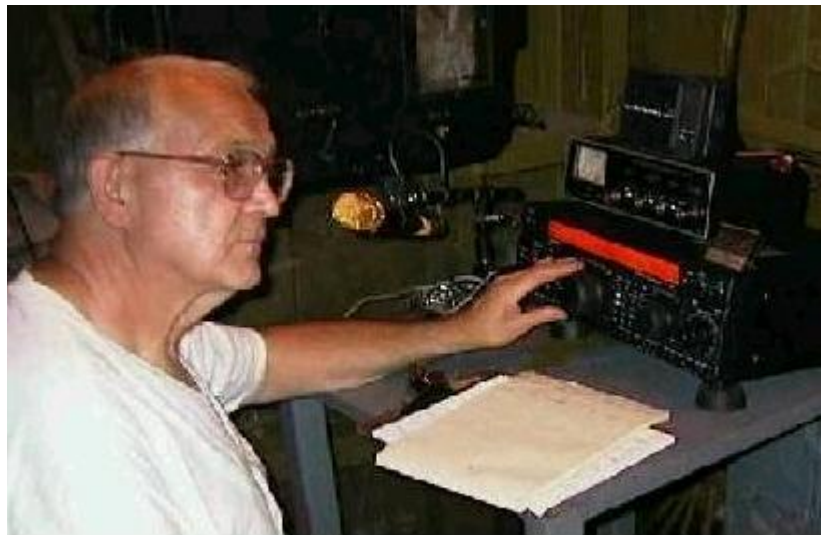
Rocky and Roy getting the whaleboat ready for launch.

The next big project is the mass of computer, 1MC, alarm cables, telephone lines and speaker wires that connect the ship to the trailer. Barry Witte and Jerry Jones are hatching a plan to run a shielded twenty pair communications cable between the ship and the visitor center to eliminate all the unsightly wires. The plan is to have the ship and the visitor center connected by one wire with a quick connect multi-terminal plug so that disconnecting and reconnecting will be easy when the ship leaves in the winter. This goes hand in hand with a project Barry has been pursuing for the past two years. He is running an armored multi conductor communications cable the length of the main deck passageway to house all the separate small wires we've run over the past ten years for alarms, speakers, phones and public address systems. This will make the connection to the trailer a whole lot easier, and make the cable runs look neater too.

Gene Jackey has been working on shore side lifelines. Our friend and neighbor **Lou Renna** at the Dutch Apple donated a spool of yellow polypropylene to us, so Gene has been welding down stanchions and setting up lifelines on the seawall. Dennis Nagi has just about finished the carpentry on the latrine. **Gordon Lattey** has enlisted the help of electrician Terry Ryan and plumber John Maguire to complete the electrical and mechanical aspects of the job, leaving our regulars to concentrate on shipboard work. When they wrap that up, Dennis will finish the floor and interior walls, and we'll have real flush plumbing for the first time on shore. Larry "Rocky" Rockword and **Roy Gunther** are back at work repainting the whaleboat. They have sanded and refinished her inside and out, and everyone is asking when she'll go back in the water. My answer is, "When the new gangway is finished." **See you next month.**



RM1 Joe Breyer.



Radio Operator Stan Murowski.

The engineers and the radiomen have joined forces to play beat the clock. The big HAM radio weekend comes up on the weekend of June 28th. This is where all amateur radio folks test their emergency skills. The plan had been to try and run the ship's station off the emergency diesel generator. Well, about two weeks ago, the shaft on the starter broke. A replacement is almost a grand more than we can afford on a project like this. Figuring the project was hopeless, **Larry LaChance** went ahead and disassembled the plastic cooling lines with plans to replace them with copper at his leisure. Undaunted, radiomen **Stan Murawski and Joe Breyer** drove all the way to Virginia on a speed run to get a replacement starter. They left Sunday and got back home on Tuesday morning and all they had to say was, "That engine better be ready to run by Saturday!" Meanwhile, **Larry, Russ Ferrer, Gene Jackey and Gus Negus** have been busting their butts in the bilges trying to make it happen. Even **Breyer** and **Walt Stolte** left their clean radio room and went down to help in the bilges. It's an all hands effort and we'll see to it that they make it. My bet is that the diesel will be repaired before the gangway is installed.



Head Painter Erik Collin rolling out the focs'cle.

Head painter Erik Collin has been painting away in the heat. Still unemployed, now on extended benefits, he has been spending about four days a week with us. His great accomplishment is sickbay, which now looks first class and ready for patients. **Erik** worked with **Rafael Suarez** and Sea Cadet volunteer **Shaun Phoenix** and **Daniel Harkenrider**. They got the foc's'le painted, the area around gun one finished and painted their way all the way down the main deck on the portside, renewing all the nonskid. Now if we can just keep the crew and tourists from walking on it until it dries.

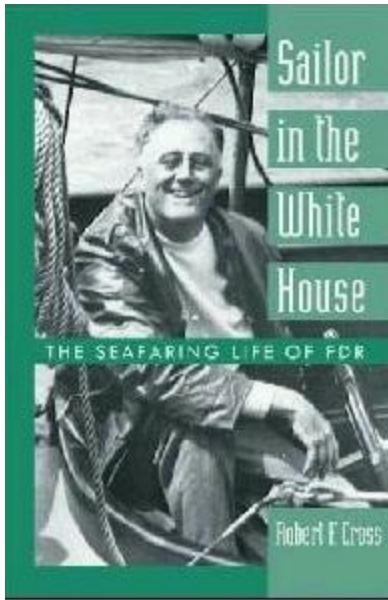


Chief Floyd shows the gun gang how to lift the train motor.

Not to be outdone, the gunners have been very busy. Master Chief Floyd and Andy Desorbo have continued scaling out the gun shack on the 01 level forward, making the office almost unbearable. Frank Beeler and Bob Lawrence repainted the forward three-inch mounts and are doing a great job keeping the rust off the slides and breeches. Rich Pavlovic has been working on 20mm mount twenty-six. The mount was totally frozen and Rich is getting it apart piece by piece and cleaning and repainting each piece. He's got her free in train and elevation again. The Chippers have been rattling away on the fantail with Dick Smith, Ed Whitbeck, Chris Fedden, Peter Jez, Buzz Surwilo, and Earl Gillette taking the whole fantail to bare metal. Despite hip problems that have slowed him down, Ray Lammers continues his work restoring electrical equipment around the ship, and Bob Dawson keeps the CIC and bridge looking sharp in between giving tours.

The Northern Illinois Chapter of DESA gave us a boost this month. Field Day Coordinator **Bud Ried** and **Gil Richter** went to work on the portside main deck and scaled and corrosealed all the rough spots. That paved the way for our crew to paint it out. **Bill Archibald** and his sons **Bill Jr.** and **Tom** came up from Jersey to help out. Their expertise is in locksmithing so they overhauled the beat and battered door to after officer's country. By the time they finished with the bondo, hardware and paint, it looked like a new door. **Ned Marrow** was a carpenter's mate of the USS BARR DE576. He came in and worked on the signal bridge polishing bright work and wanted it to be known that ship work was in honor of his shipmate **Bill Bower** off the MUIR. However, the mainstay of the group in terms of staying power and dependability turned out to be old **Jim Larnar** off the USS DAY. Jim painted out the reefer deck for the second year straight, and then went to work with our guys on the fantail. He bore down on a needle gun and air chisel all week in ninety degree temperatures, helping with one of the biggest projects we have going, taking the whole fantail down to bare metal.

Erik Collin has taken on a personal project in the visitor center. He is collecting pictures of all the local volunteers when they were in service. He'd like to get a framed 8 x10 of each crew member who as put in 100 hours a year or more to the project. He's not telling anyone who is who. My guess is that there will be q quiz sometime in the fall. Get your portraits to Erik now!



Bob Cross's new book.

The SLATER's favorite author is about to have his first book released. Board member **Bob Cross** is Chairman of the Albany Port District Commission; Commissioner of the Albany Water Department and a former award-winning newspaper reporter, as well as one of the most



The USS Hubbard crew honoring their departed shipmate and Slater volunteer John Stefanic.

dedicated trustees of our USS SLATER. Somehow, between all these other duties he has found time to write a book, **SAILOR IN THE WHITE HOUSE**, a seagoing biography of President Franklin D Roosevelt. The behind-the-scenes look at Franklin D. Roosevelt's extraordinary skill as a blue-water sailor explores how his love of the sea shaped his approach to public service and even influenced the course of events in World War II. Family and friends, Secret Service agents, and others reveal never-before-told stories of their days afloat with America's greatest seafaring president. Bob examines Roosevelt's great affection for the sea in the context of an era dominated by the Great Depression and two world wars. From luxury ocean liners and presidential yachts to submarines and kayaks, this book lists all of the vessels on which FDR sailed and includes some never-before-published photographs. **SAILOR IN THE WHITE HOUSE** is being published by the US Naval Institute Press, and it should be a great read. We're planning on a book signing in the SLATER's wardroom this October to celebrate the release. We're already subtly hinting that his second effort should deal with a history of destroyer escorts.

Finally there are several new faces among us. We've hired our summer guides to help us out with tours this season. **Argus Carriger, Sarah Morehouse, Joe Bergman and Eileen Parfrey** join returning regulars **Eric Weidman, Kira Zaikowski, Jeremy Hoyt and Peter Schick**. They join our gang of regular volunteers in keeping the education programs running smoothly. And we have a new office manager and marketing coordinator. **Rosehn Gipe** comes to us from Louisiana by way of ten years in South Dakota. Her previous experience includes working as a branch office administrator with the investment firm Edward Jones, eight years as an administrative assistant with the National Music Museum in Vermillion, South Dakota, and most surprisingly four years working with me as a tour guide and development administrator at the USS KIDD from 1987 to 1991. Those who know me would have to question why anyone who had previously worked with me would come back for more. Her primary challenge will be trying to keep me organized, a formidable task at best. To all of you, welcome aboard. **See you next month.**