

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 (518) 431-1943, Fax 432-1123
Vol. 7 no. 6 June 2004

When we last left the SLATER saga, the Michigan Chapter of DESA was just departing from their field day week, and the USS HUSE crew was reporting aboard. Continue ship's work.

The USS HUSE crew, led by George Amandola, came aboard 20 strong and went to work.

Just as the Michigan Chapter of DESA is the only chapter to send regular work parties to the SLATER, the USS HUSE DE145 is the only ship association that sends a crew to sleep, eat and carry on restoration of the Slater. Those attending were: **Ernie Aeschliman, George Amandola (Skipper), Wally Bringslid, Butch Burkman, Bill Camp, Ray Clarke, Mal Holdernbess, Bob & David Kehrer** (father and son), **Jim Larner** and his daughter **Robin** (from Illinois), **Gil Liss, Bill Mehan, Jaye & Roland Robbins** (father and son), **Roy Roetzler, Doug Strieter** and **Clem Vaughan** (CAP-DESA member from Vermont). Besides their outstanding duties of doing everything, they completely painted the O-1 level deck. Another great job! They challenge all other DE Association members to top that. **Lou Riccardi**, who did the cooking, and his helper **Joe Coletti** manned the Galley. Again, they owe a great debt to the silent member of the crew, **Lou Riccardi's** wife **Nancy**. **Nancy Riccardi** prepped a lot of the meals at home and brought them down to Lou. All he had to do was heat and serve.



The USS HUSE work crew.

The big task assigned the HUSE crew was repainting the 01 level deck. Ray Clarke, Bill Camp, Jaye Robbins, Butch Burkman, Wally Bringslid, Ernie Aeschliman, Bill Mehan, Roy Roetzler, Gil Liss, Jim and Robin Larner and George all tackled the job. The first two days were spent chipping and priming the rusty spots. In the process, they punched five different holes in the deck. Fortunately, we had Clem Vaughan and Doug Strieter in the crew to patch up the holes as they punched them. On Wednesday, they started rolling out the deck with nonskid dark gray paint, leaving a narrow path for the tourists. On Friday, they rerouted the visitor traffic to the portside and painted out the unfinished section, and did a lot of haze gray touch up around the 01 level. They left that area looking beautiful. That Friday, on their last day, they worked on the portside waterways and bulwark to get that deck ready for painting so that both the deck and deckhouse will look as good as new.

One of the most pleasant surprises that took place during the week was thanks to Bill Camp. A former engineman off the J. RICHARD WARD DE243, Bill had previously worked on the SLATER when she was in Manhattan. He is well connected and thorough, and managed to acquire a complete set of SLATER blueprints on microfilm for us last year. Now retired, Bill spends most of his time helping his son Barry Camp, who happens to run a marina on the Jersey coast. Now if you remember, last month we talked about the broken heat exchanger on the motor whaleboat engine and the \$800. replacement cost for a new heat exchanger. Always the opportunist, I was sitting across from Bill, having coffee with him when the light bulb went off. The conversation went like this.

"Bill, doesn't your son own a boat yard?"

"He sure does"

"You guys do engine work?"

"Yup"



George Amandola supervising his crew.

"You wouldn't happen to know where I could get a spare heat exchanger for a thirty horse Westerbeke diesel cheap, do you?"

"I think I have one on my workbench."

Bill had Barry FEDEX the heat exchanger to Albany. It arrived Wednesday. Bill and **Doug Streiter** spent Thursday and Friday installing the new heat exchanger and making other repairs to the boat engine. They set up temporary cooling out of a bucket and tested the diesel and it ran beautifully as the boat hung in the davits. The only problem they had was some squawking from the deck crew when they first started the engine and the overboard discharge spit coolant all over the freshly painted boat deck.



Scraping the 01 level.

Clem Vaughan and Bill Kehrner spent the week doing odd welding jobs. They ended up repairing five holes on the 01 level deck where overzealous chippers punched through the rust. One over the showers, two in the muffler room, one over the machine shop and one in the ship's store area. He also fabricated new tie down rails for the flag bags and made some repairs up on the flying bridge.

Roland Robbins deserves special mention because of his work in the paint locker. Each year Roland has assigned himself the job of Paint Locker Petty Officer. He keeps the brushes clean and makes sure everyone is stocked with paint. He always leaves the campsite in better shape than he found it. It is great to have these guys involved and we look forward to having them all back next spring.

When all the extra help departed, the burden of maintenance again fell on our regulars. As it continues to get warmer and warmer, **Chris Fedden, Ed Whitbeck and Dave Hamilton** continued chipping in the bosun's locker, even though it's past time to wrap up that project and come topside. **Stan Murawski** completed the insulation repairs in the Bosun's locker and started chipping the foc's'cle above them, so now the noise of the needle guns reverberates in all directions. **Doug Tanner, Benner and Chuck Teal** finished the installation of the grinder pump in the septic tank, and we are now able to pump wastewater directly into the City sewer system. **Barry Witte** and **Gary Sheedy** installed the controller in the aft engine room and handled the wiring chores for the pump, power, alarms, and controls. **Doug** has now tackled the fabrication of the accommodation ladder for the motor whaleboat access and he hopes to have that completed by the end of July. We are using a couple of the ladders that **George Amandola** and **Ed Zajkowski** acquired for us from Philadelphia scrappers last year. Doug is fabricating the davit stand, davit and hinged platforms with the help of veteran welder **Clark Farnsworth**.



Bill Camp stuck scraping paint waiting for the heat exchanger to arrive.



Lou Riccardi at work in the Galley.

With the engine repair complete Rocky and Roy Gunther have the whaleboat looking beautiful, and she is ready to go in the water. The plan now is to put her in on Saturday, June 26th, after we get through the DE Day Memorial Service and the SLATER Night at the Fort Orange Club. The boat looks like a yacht, and access will be a lot easier this year with the new accommodation ladder.



Rocky has the boat all ready to go now that the heat exchanger has been replaced thanks to **Bill Camp**.

The radio gang has been focusing their attention of the restoration of the TAJ radio transmitter. Don Bulger and Dick Engler have spend hours restoring the finish on the receiver to the original crinkle coat finish, and have restored all the knobs, switches and lighting. The transmitter looks ready to operate, if there were only someone to talk to on those old frequencies. Joe Breyer has been working on the SA radar presentation. As you know, the plan is to install modern surface radar into an old SA radar consol, and that project is progressing nicely. They have their annual emergency field day coming up the weekend of June 26th, where

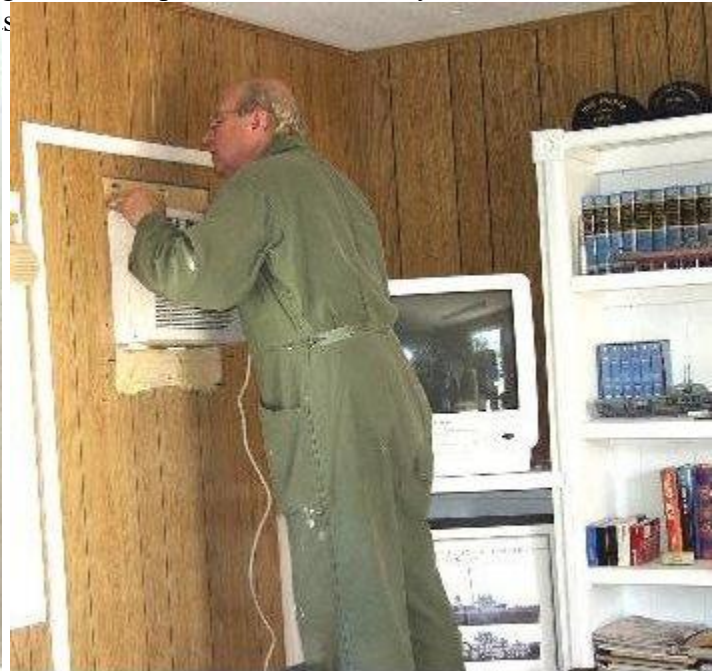
they will operate from the ship on emergency power for 24 hours as operators from all over the country demonstrate the emergency applications of ham radio. The IC electricians, **Roy Warner, Jerry Jones, Larry Williams, Bob Callender** and **Ken Kaskoun** have been working in support of the overnight camping program. They have set up jack boxes and phones at several of the gun mounts so the kids can use the phones to talk to each other under supervision. **Roy** in particular has put a lot of time into the IMC system, balancing the load and redistributing the inputs.

They also mounted additional sound powered phone jackboxes and a four-phone storage box by gun one to be used as training during the overnight encampments.

We have big painting plans for August, so if you can wield a paintbrush or a roller we need you. We plan to repaint the entire starboard side of the hull this year. All in one day. How? Because the crew of the fireboat JOHN J. HARVEY have graciously offered to stay alongside the SLATER an extra day and serve as a painting platform for us. The date is Tuesday August 17th and Wednesday August 18th. So pray for sun. The HARVEY crew has firmed up their summer tour schedule. They will arrive Monday the 16th and drop off visitors and pick up visitors for the trip to Troy. They will overnight in Troy, and return Tuesday at 1000 to disembark visitors from Troy. From that point on they are at our disposal to work off of. We plan to work from aft to the bow, repainting the hull. The evening of the 17th they will host the annual joint HARVEY/USS SLATER volunteer appreciation barbecue, and we will be able to continue painting Wednesday until their first trip at noon. They will run excursion trips into the river Wednesday afternoon, and depart Albany for home in Manhattan on Thursday morning. We hope to get a real strong turnout of painters that Tuesday. Thanks to HARVEY,



IC Electrician Roy Warner matching speakers.



Dennis Nagi installing an air conditioner in the classroom.

We took a step up in the academic community this month. For the last 18 years, Siena College's History Department has hosted a conference focusing on specific years of World War II. This year the focus was 1944 and what better place to hold the plenary session than aboard the SLATER. On a perfect June evening, approximately 75 researchers, scholars, and history buffs from around the world arrived at the ship to hear **Dan Lynch**, author of the recently published book about the Battle of the Bulge, *Into the Dragon's Teeth*. Most significantly, three veterans of that winter battle attended the event. If you DE guys thought you had it tough, you should talk to them. Following the presentation, guests were free to enjoy the catered dinner on the pier and tour the SLATER. Everyone was notably impressed. Some of the guests were overheard suggesting an overnight encampment next year. Thanks to all the tour guides who volunteered their evening to answer questions and help the visitors around the ship.

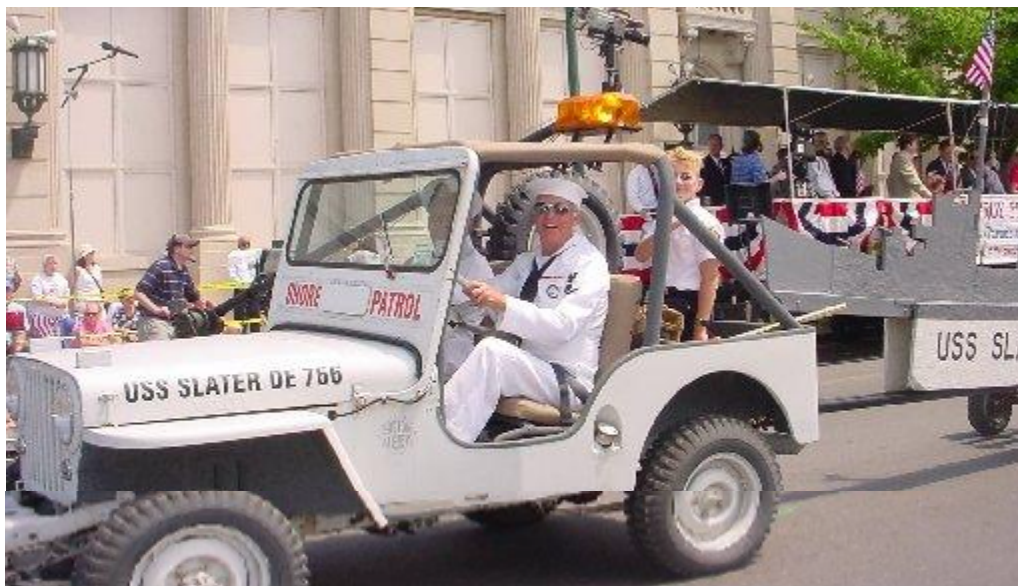


Dan Lynch talking to Battle of the Bulge Veterans.



The Siena College presentation by Dan Lynch.

Our participation in another academic achievement going back two years has really paid off. **Dr. Susan Douglas of Monmouth College** collaborated with Garden State Chapter president **Jim Mitchell** to do a series of student interviews with DE veterans. The effort included a tour of the ship and has resulted in a website that includes all the oral histories. If you wish to see the final product of this great effort, check out their work on our website. They have done a magnificent job of capturing DE History and included a number of photographs on the web page. Our thanks to all who helped make this program a reality.



The SLATER Jeep in the Troy Flag Day Parade.

The Jeep is back in operation. **Gordon Lattey** got the jeep out of Frank Lasch's barn, and got the starter fixed in time for us to participate in the Troy Flag Day Parade. **Ken Kaskoun, Dave Floyd and Don Kruse**, who survived the sinking of the USS UNDERHILL, all participated in the event, towing our USS SLATER Float.

Attention all GE employees & retirees! We have been approved to receive matching funds under the GE Foundation Community Matching Gifts Program. Approved gifts from eligible GE participants will be matched on a **dollar-for-dollar** basis. The process is a little convoluted, but it's "free" money. First, if you have given ANY monetary donation to the SLATER this calendar year, you must register your gift. There are two ways: online at the GE Foundation website, click on matching gifts; by phone with the Customer Service Center at 800-305-0669. To register online you will need your SSO I.D. and password. Remember, our official organization name is Destroyer Escort Historical Museum. Then, we will go online to verify that your gift was received.

We must receive gifts from a minimum of ten GE donors totaling a minimum of \$1000 each calendar year in order to remain eligible. Employees, retirees, and surviving spouses of retirees are eligible to participate. We know we have a lot of you contributing, so lets double your money!



Ken Kaskoun took a group of Marines on tour who are on their way to Iraq. Good luck to our troops.

We are standing by for the next several big events as I write. We will have our annual DE Day Memorial Service on the morning of June 19th. CAPDESA Yeoman **Bob Donlon** and our own **Paul Czesak** are organizing the event, and they have enlisted the services of our hero from Korea, Capt. **Greg Krawczyk** to MC the event. We are expecting a major turnout of SLATER friends and supporters including our own Mayor **Gerald Jennings**, County Executive **Mike Breslin**

and Rensselaer County Exec **Kathy Jimino**. That evening is the big USS SLATER Night at the Fort Orange Club. **Doris Fischer** and **Geoffrey** and **Thessaly Bullard** are putting the finishing touches on the event. The programs are printed, the place cards made up, and the menu is set. We are expecting seventy distinguished guests, and me. **Bob Cross** is scheduled to give a presentation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and **Greg Krawczyk** will talk about his exploits in Korea salvaging the parts from the APD USS CAVALLARO. They are even giving me a few minutes to make my pitch for the SLATER. All I can add is that **Gordon Lattey** and my wife took me to have my tux fitted, and my wife is very excited about seeing me dressed in formal wear for the first time in my life. It's another example of how **Doris** brings out the best in all of us, for the ship. **See you next month.**